Security Council (SC)

The situation on the Korean peninsula

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Introduction

The Korean peninsula has always been the source of conflict between the regional powers of eastern asia. The first sino-japanese conflict which ranged from 1894 to 1895, which pitted the Qing dynasty and the Japanese empire against each other. The subsequent Japanese victory led to the long occupation of Korea by Japan. During the Japanese occupation Korean citizens were stripped of freedom of assembly and freedom of speech, moreover, many genocides and famines purposely perpetrated by the Japanese caused malcontent amongst the population of Korean. As a result, some Koreans sought more extremist and fairly new ideologies in order to remove the Japanese from power, such as ultra-nationalism and Marxism. Amongst these early Korean marxists was the future leader of North Korea, Kim Il-sung. After the Japanese defeat in the second world war, the Korean peninsula was split along the 38th parallel, the north was handed over to the Soviet Union and the South was Given to Americans. Each nation established a satellite state on their respective sides of the peninsula.

The Korean Peninsula is a coastal land mass, which spreads 1,100km out of mainland Asia. The Korean Peninsula shares a large border with China to the north and a border with Russia to the northeast, moreover, it shares a sea border with Japan. In fact, to this day South Korea and Japan have many disputes over islands and Islets in the sea of Japan and in the Tsushima strait. The Occupation of Korea ended on August 25th, 1945, the Peninsula was divided into the 38th parallel with the north being absorbed into the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union and the south becoming a satellite state of the United States. With the help of China, the Soviet Union was quick to set up a communist dictatorship with the aforementioned Kim Il-sung as its supreme leader. In The south, The United States handpicked Syngman Rhee as the head of state of the south. At the time of the division, the north had a population of 25,200,000 million people while the south had little over 20 million. The United States propped up the economy of the south in order to contain the spread of communism, also known as the "domino effect" thus ensued the brutal repression of communists in South Korea, all the while the west was benefitting from the cheap exports of natural minerals. The war that lasted from 1950 to 1953 would eventually end in a stalemate, with the establishment of the DMZ (demilitarised zone) between the Communist north and the capitalist South. To this day the two sides did not sign a peace deal and no armistice has been reached. In an effort to break from the dependency on defence from the Soviet Union, in the 1980s North Korea started developing nuclear weapons. In the following decades with the collapse of the Soviet Union, North Korea has doubled down on their complete self-isolationist policy called “Juche”. Although North Korea has continued with its nuclear programme, there has been a thawing period between the two Koreas, especially during the 2017-2018. Throughout the entire duration of the conflict, the Security council has been diligently involved in the Korean peninsula, and a final solution to the situation would have been strived for by almost all of the P5.

Definition of Key Terms

Communism:

Communism as it was applied in the 20th century was the system most commonly used by the USA and its allies. In this system the means of production are centralised and the state is in charge of every aspect of ordinary life.

Capitalism:

Capitalism was the counterpart of Communism, mainly adopted by the United states and its allies. Capitalism Utilises the free market to organise the means of production.

Coalition:

A temporary Alliance between nations to be able to carry out joint action.

Demilitarised zone (DMZ):

The DMZ was created to prevent conflict, and no one from either side is permitted to enter.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT):

the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a United Nations agreement that aims to the regulation of nuclear technologies

General Overview

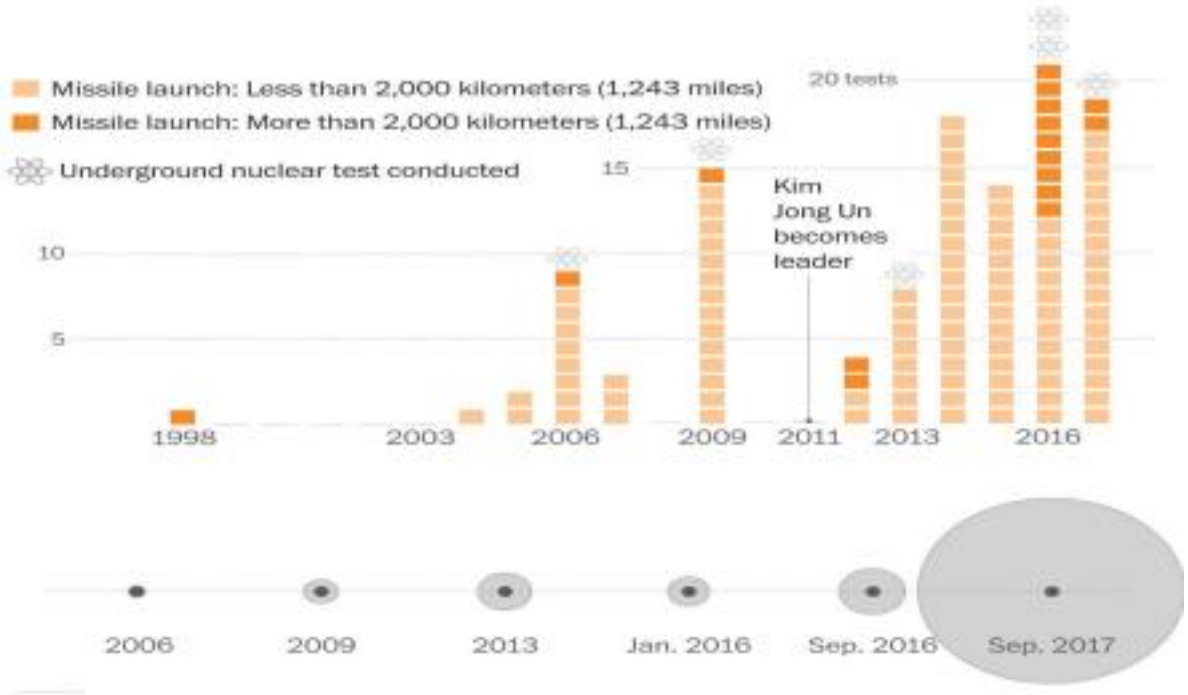
Even though the political landscape of most countries has changed completely since the initiation of the conflict in 1950, the individual nations have stayed very much alike. Russia and China continue to have diplomatic relations with the DPRK and the People's republic of China is North Korea's biggest trade partner, serving as a lifeline for the continuation of the existence of North Korea. On the other hand, the South has taken steps to democratise since the 1960s and they normalised relations with China and other socialist leaning nations in Asia such as Vietnam and Cambodia. The United States has continued since the inception of the Republic of Korean to be the biggest supplier of resources, both economic and military. Furthermore, Korean has established great economic relations with the other major free-market power in the region, Japan. The two Koreans have established minor diplomatic relations in the later half of the 20th century, mostly for recreational purposes such as sports and tourism, and to allow families divided by the DMZ to meet up with each other. In the 2010s there were a round of “exploratory talks” during the Obama administration held in New York, Geneva and beijing between 2011 and 2012. The agreement that resulted from these talks was known as the “leap day Agreement” the agreement layed out the moratorium of Nuclear activities perpetrated by North Korea. In return, the United States gave 240,000 metric tons of various nutritional supplies to North Korea. These Agreements Were effectively only respected by the United states, As in 2013 North Korea launched one of its biggest and more successful underground nuclear tests. The relations between the DPRK and the west continued to worsen when North Korean authorities detained student Otto Warmbier for trying to steal a propaganda poster. As a result of these escalations, North Korea has banned all American citizens from entering the DPRK and the USA has imposed further sanctions on North Korea, this all happened in 2016.

Detailed map of the DMZ between the DPRK and the ROK [1]

When the collapse of the eastern bloc was being made clearer by the late 1980s and early 1990s, North Korean leadership knew that it could not hold its own against the United States and the West diplomatically. Hence it started developing its nuclear programme and a way to leverage its position in Asia with the United States and its allies in the region. Not only was the DPRKs nuclear programme a move to keep the United States on its toes, but it also served as a mechanism for securing North Korea's Independence from Beijing and Moscow. Nuclear development in the DPRK only increased when Kim Jong-il took power. He exploited the nuclear non-proliferation treaties that were being signed in the 1970s as a way to acquire information on how to develop weapons of mass destruction.

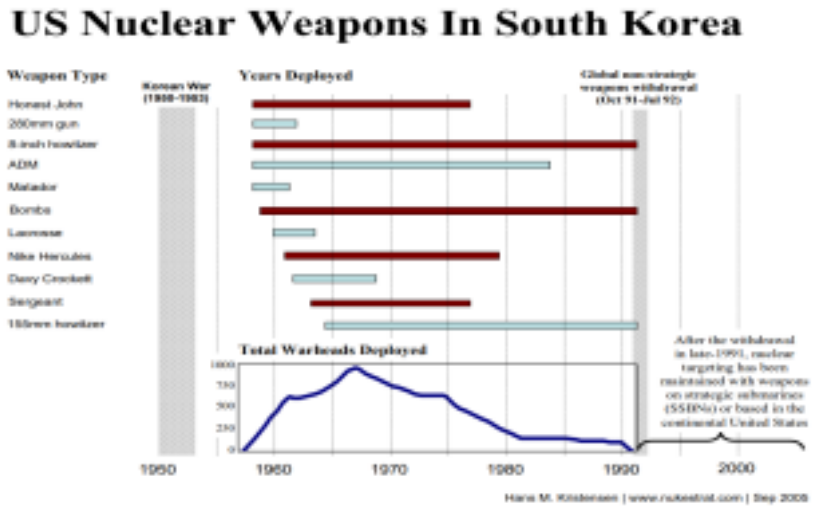
In 1974 North Korea joined the International atomic energy agency (IAEA), they even had a scientist station at the EIEAs headquarters in Geneva to syphon information that could prove useful for North Korea's nuclear weapons programme. By 1980 North Korea was able to build a nuclear reactor that could make weapons grade uranium, decades after the construction of the reactor it was discovered that it could only provide for 26 days of energy annually for the entire DPRK, which has led US intelligence to believe that the reactors original purpose was never for improving north Korea's energy use. In 2003 North Korea announced that it would be withdrawing from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. This put US intelligence on high alert, predicting that the DPRK was planning a possible nuclear test. This was in fact the case when in 2006 North Korea had its first official Nuclear test. After Kicking out all IAEA inspectors, North Korea continued its nuclear testing, ramping up their WMD programme in the 2010s. In 2016 North Korea tested their first Hydrogen bomb, a WMD considerably more powerfull that Nuclear weapons, this was meet with extreme concern by the UN, NATO and the international community which warned that any further development of WMDs could prove to be catastrophic if an eventual conflict broke out in asia. In 2017 and 2018 North Korea and the US initiated talks between each other to normalise relations, and to discuss the eventual cessation of nuclear testing done by North Korea. On the 30th of June, President Trump met with Kim Jong-un on the DMZ, being the first US president to do so. This was met with hope from the international community which saw this as a step in the right direction, and a possibility to achieve peace in the region

[1] "Korea Demilitarized Zone." Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 20540 USA, www.loc.gov/resource/g7901f.ct000578/?r=0.303. Accessed 6 Nov. 2022.



Timeline of North Korea's nuclear test.[2]

South Korea has never developed nuclear weapons of their own, senior diplomats saw that move as a provocation that could upset the fragile balance of power in the region. South Korea has had American weapons of mass destruction on its soil since 1958, the weapons stationed in South Korea reached a peak in 1961 when over 950 warheads were stationed in South Korea, after the detente period during the 1970s the United states started to slowly remove weapons from South Korea. In 1991 all warheads were removed from South Korea soil. Although never holding a Nuclear arsenal of their own, South Korea has never signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The ROK has also always voted against any UN resolution which encourages nations to sign or ratify the TPNW since 2018.



[2] "Analysis | a Timeline of North Korea's Five Nuclear Tests and How the U.S. Has Responded." Washington Post, www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/04/14/a-timeline-of-north-koreas-five-nucear-tests-and-ho w-the-u-s-has-responded/.

American Nuclear warheads stationed in South Korea[3]

Major Parties Involved

North Korea:

The country founded north of the 38th parallel, known in western culture as a Kim Jung-un-led communist one-man dictatorship. The country has long been regarded as one of those with the strictest media restrictions since it is cut off from international media because of fear of westernised propaganda. The nation has adopted a Juche policy, which is a self-isolationist approach to diplomacy with minimal ties to close allies like China and Russia. North Korea has been able to build up its nuclear arsenal in secret from the rest of the world thanks to its policy of isolation.

South Korea:

South Korea, a country founded south of the 38th parallel, began as a Syngman Rhee-led dictatorship. Due to financial and military support from the United States, South Korea has an advantage over its Northern counterpart. The South sought to broaden its diplomatic horizons by establishing economic agreements with nations that share its political views, such as Japan and Taiwan, while the north embraced its isolationism. In addition, South Korea has been willing to talk with many former socialist nations in Asia, including Vietnam, Laos, and to some extent, the People's Republic of China. In the modern era, South Korea has advanced well beyond its Northern counterpart and has become a fully democratic economic powerhouse.

China and Russia:

They continue to have a lot of support for North Korea as they did during the Korean War. They disregarded the Security Council arguments brought forth by the United States against North Korea.

United States:

The United States has always had involvement in the Korean situation. General McArthur was the original proposer of the border on the 38th parallel, this agreement was extremely beneficial for the allies and the western powers as it ensured that not all of the Korean peninsula fell to communism. The United States supporting the ROK economically has benefited them immensely, as now South Korea has become a huge economic power and one of the largest suppliers to the United States of micro chips and other types of advanced technologies. Furthemore, the United States has benefited from deploying their own military in South Korea. This has allowed them to have a consistent present in the South China sea and in the sea of Japan.

Timeline

29th August 1910 After defeating the Russian Empire in the Sino-Japanese war, the Japanese Empire took control of the Korean Peninsula.

August 15th 1945 Japan submits to the US and the other Allies forces, bringing World War 2 to a close. Among the As a result of Japan's defeat in the war, it was compelled to give up To

[3] "The Nuclear Information Project: US Nuclear Weapons in Korea." Www.nukestrat.com, www.nukestrat.com/korea/koreahistory.htm#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20deployed%20nuclear.

the Allied forces, Korea

15th August 1948 With Syngman Rhee as president, South Korea is now known as the "Republic of Korea." The termination of the military regime and the orderly withdrawal of American forces from South Korea were made public announcements by the US in early 1949.

9th September 1949 The "People's Republic of Korea " is the new name for North Korea. The group names Kim Il Sung as its Divine leader.

June 23rd 1950 – July 27th 1953 Fighting between the North and South in the Korean War soon escalated into a full-scale war, with the North receiving help from the Soviet Union and China and the South receiving assistance from the United States, the United Nations, and the United Kingdom. Even though an armistice was reached in 1953, many people still think the war is being waged today.

January 21st 1968 Seoul's presidential residence is raided by North Korean special forces in anAttempt on President Park Chung-life Hee's

August 15th 1974 President Park Chung-Hee is shot by a North Korean spy during one of his addresses. Although his wife is dead, the president is unharmed.

November 29th 1987 A bomb built by North Korean agents bursts on a South Korean airliner, killing 115 people.

June 15th 1999 – November 10th 2009 Along the Yellow Sea border, there are naval conflicts between the two countries. 33 North Koreans were murdered in total.

November 23rd, 2010 North Korea fires artillery onto South Korean island along the disputed border, leads to fighting between North and South Korean troops. Results in casualties and property damage

Past Attempts To Solve The Issue

Since the beginning of the conflict, the UN has made numerous attempts to resolve the issue. The Korean War. Since the war's end, the UN has established the Demilitarized Zone and overseen the implementation of the passed solutions They have, however, been unable to deal with the major issues that have arisen in recent years. The UN has been unable to resolve the debate over the sea border, as resolutions and clauses submitted to the Security Council have made little to no progress due to vetoes from the United States, Russian Federation, and China. Because the issue of sea borders has caused the most conflict in recent years, the UN and the Security Council must find a solution. The "Six Party Talks," which are talks between North Korea, South Korea, the United States, Russia, China, and Japan, are one way they have attempted to resolve the issue. These are intended to deal with the issue in a less formal manner than debate in order to develop plans that will solve the issue on which both sides agree.

Possible Solutions

The solution to this problem is to develop plans on which both parties can agree. Because there are so many minor issues, such as the numerous minor clashes, it is more important to focus on the causes of these clashes than on the clashes themselves. This entails concentrating on disagreements over sea borders, fishing grounds, international trade, and nuclear threats. The ICC could resolve the issue of sea borders because it has previously issued sea border rulings. However, there must be some way to ensure that both parties agree to follow this ruling as the final ruling. After that, it may be necessary to address the issue of fishing areas and

regulations. After these issues are resolved, the nations' borders may be opened to allow for more trade. The most delicate issue, however, is that of nuclear weapons.

This is a problem in the Peninsula as well as the rest of the world. However, it is even more prominent on the Peninsula because South Korea, as North Korea's closest and most entrenched adversary, has one of the highest chances of being attacked. However, it is critical to recognize the significance of joint decisions because the resolution faces the problem of not being followed by a government as unpredictable as North Korea's.

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