



Background Guide

Disarmament and International Security

1 | Nuclear Disarmament in the Korean Peninsula: Pathways to a Nuclear-Free Zone

SDG: 3. Good Health and Well-being, 16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, 17.
Partnerships to achieve the Goal

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Committee Introduction

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) is the first committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), addressing issues related to international security and disarmament. The committee seeks solutions to mitigate factors that threaten international peace.

The committee goes through general debate, thematic discussions, and action on drafts to serve as a vital role in promoting international peace. DISEC fosters international cooperation and dialogues to ensure the safe use of arms and the integrity of the International Humanitarian Law, formulating strategies and frameworks to address security challenges from conventional arms control to cyber security threats and terrorism.

Each year, DISEC's agenda revolves around the most pressing topics, such as but not limited to the evolving methods and natures of armed conflicts, the incorporation of technologies in the cyber regime, and regional conflicts such as the Israel-HAMAS war and the Russo-Ukrainian War. The frameworks and resolutions established in this committee serves as a fundamental basis to further actions by other committees of the United Nations, national governments, and non-state actors.

Agenda Introduction

The Korean peninsula remains one of the most critical regions that holds responsibility for international security. Despite various diplomatic efforts and negotiations including the Six-Party Talks and summits, North Korea's nuclear programs are still ongoing, thus the region remains heavily militarized. The question of how to achieve an agreement in the Korean peninsula and create a nuclear-free zone in the area has become one of the most urgent issues in the status quo.

A nuclear-free region in the Korean peninsula would serve as a significant step towards nuclear disarmament. However, the path to achieving this has numerous obstacles that hinders the international community, such as but not limited to the security and sovereignty of North Korea, the role of neighboring states like South Korea, China, and Japan, and the extent to which global powers like the United States and the United Nations should intervene in this tension. Although North Korea has a resolute stance on maintaining its nuclear technologies, the international community should continue to devise a balanced agreement.

The agenda will explore potential solutions to achieving denuclearization, including diplomatic and economic measures. Delegates will engage in debates to seek peaceful, sustainable, and effective solutions to mitigate the multifaceted security concerns across the Korean Peninsula, specifically the concern of nuclear proliferation in North Korea.

Letter from the Chairs

Welcome to the Global Education City MUN XI and the Disarmament and International Security (DISEC) committee.

Greetings, my name is Jenny Jin, and it is an honor to serve as your head chair for the Disarmament and International Security (DISEC) committee of GECMUN XI. As a sophomore attending Korea International School Jeju (KISJ), and this is my sixth year taking part in Model UN, both as a delegate and a chair. GECMUN XI will be my fourteenth conference overall, and sixth chairing experience. My ultimate goal as a head chair in this conference is to become the best guidance for the delegates and fellow chairs. I sincerely hope this conference leaves a lasting impression on your MUN career.

Greeting delegates, I am James Park, a sophomore from NLCS Jeju. It is an honor to serve as the Deputy Chair for the DISEC in the upcoming GECMUN XI. This would be my fourth year participating in MUN, and my third chairing experience. Delivering speeches on the podium and interacting with students from the other schools throughout the conference might be nervous or stressful for some. However, I hope you can overcome such pressure by utilizing such aspects of MUN as opportunities to not only boost your confidence in public speaking but also build new friendships. I wish you luck in your preparation and I look forward to meeting you all at the conference!

My name is Lily Kim, and I will be serving as your Associate chair for this conference. I am a freshman (Grade 9) attending NLCS Jeju and this is my second time as a chair. I have been an active member of the MUN community for three years, primarily as a delegate, which is why it is such an honor to be a part of GECMUN XI's DISEC committee as a chair this year. MUN is such a vibrant and diverse community, and despite it also sometimes being a stressful one, I sincerely hope that with this particular conference, all of you are able to recognize this event as an opportunity to further your public speaking skills, create long lasting friendships, but moreover challenge yourself. I hope your preparation goes well and I look forward to seeing you all during the conference.

As the chairs of the conference it is our mission to make this conference as memorable and meaningful for everyone involved. If any questions or concerns arise, please don't hesitate to contact any of us via email below.

Best regards,

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Key Terms

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Established in 1957 and has its main office in Vienna, Austria, an International Organisation which aims to promote nuclear weapon's peaceful application and discourage its military application. It keeps strong ties with the UN while operating as an independent organization.

Intercontinental Ballistic Missile

A kind of missile that can transport nuclear warheads across great distances. It is well known that North Korea built it, enabling the nation to fire nuclear weapons wherever they choose.

Nuclear Experiment

Experiments conducted, usually by a nation, to evaluate the overall potency of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

An international treaty signed to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons, to encourage collaboration in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

An international treaty signed to prohibit the conducting of nuclear tests or experiments under sea, in atmosphere or in space. The treaty permitted underground testing provided that the radioactive fallout stays inside the borders of the country carrying the experiments out.

Disarmament

The reduction of size of the military personnels, weapons or equipment.

Six-party talks

A series of negotiation talks to peacefully address the security issue raised by North Korea's nuclear programs.

Sunshine Policy

One of South Korea's foreign policy toward North Korea, which predicated on the idea that cooperation and compassion work better than threats and coercion.

Korean War

The Korean war was fought between North and South Korea, when the North invaded the South on June 25, 1950. It ended on July 23, 1953, with the signing of the armistice.

Trump-Kim Summit

A series of summits conducted by US President Donald Trump and North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un, for the Korean peace progress and denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

Historical Background

On August 15, 1945, Japan's surrender in World War II brought an end to the colonial era of Korea. After the war, however, Korea was split into two rivaling countries, with the North under Soviet influence and the South under U.S. influence. The rivalry between the two erupted into the Korean War from 1950 to 1953, which halted with an armistice but without a peace treaty.

As a consequence of the ongoing state of hostility between the two Koreas, a weapon powerful enough to destroy one another, the nuclear weapon, started to be built throughout the mid 20th century. Beginning to develop nuclear weapons with Soviet and Chinese support throughout the 60s, North Korea expanded its nuclear capabilities amid increasing international concern into the 70s and 80s.

Such tensions began to thaw in 1994, when North Korea agreed to abort their project for developing illicit plutonium weapons in exchange for aid. However, the framework collapsed in 2002, as the United States accused North Korea of a secret uranium enrichment program in progress. With that, the tension was brought up to the stage again. While there had been a series of collaborative diplomatic efforts, such as the Six-Party Talks in which North and South Korea, the United States, China, Japan, and Russia held multilateral negotiations to come to an agreement of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula, these efforts ultimately failed due to mutual distrust and a stagnant progress of negotiations due to non-compliance.

The nuclear ambitions of the country have been a big point of international contention since the first nuclear test of North Korea in 2006, followed by tests and missile launches. This move proved itself detrimental, as these actions increased the international sanctions and condemnation, therefore duly affecting the geopolitical stability of the region. South Korea, in response to North Korea's provocations, later on in the 1990s and 2000s gave rise to the "Sunshine Policy", intending to create a setting of engagement and cooperation to hold negotiations for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a cordial setting. The outcome was realized in the inter-Korean summits in 2000, 2007, and 2018, in which both nations talked about how to further relations and go toward denuclearization. These efforts too, however, failed to produce enduringly meaningful results as progress kept being set to zero base with the change of presidential leadership in South Korea and the consequent policies stemming from the presidents' willingness to negotiate.

The 2018-2019 Trump-Kim summits were historic in the sense that the president of the United States at the time, Donald Trump, was the first ever American political leader to visit North Korea for the purpose of conducting negotiations to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula and also to declare an official end to the Korean War. However, this summit too ultimately turned out to be inconclusive attempts at direct diplomacy between the US and

North Korea. The summits held at Hanoi in 2019 ended up amounting to very little by way of substantive agreements and also put an end to any further negotiations. The continuous effort at diplomacy has reiterated the requirement of a balanced approach—pressure coupled with cordial engagement—to achieve a denuclearized Korean Peninsula.

Current State of Affairs

After the proclamation of the June 15th South-North Joint Declaration at the 2000 Inter-Korean Summit, the mood of reconciliation built up between two antagonistic countries – the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, alleviating the decade-long military tension in the Korean peninsula. However, North Korea’s withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 2003 and its announcement of the success of its first nuclear test in 2006 sent shockwaves to the global community, threatening regional and international security. After its initial success, North Korea conducted six additional nuclear tests in 2009, 2013, 2016, and 2017, respectively, and such repeated threats of nuclear weapons not only reignited the military tension across the Korean Peninsula but also consolidated the sense of antagonism between the people of the two countries.

The DPRK’s continuous pursuit of nuclear weapons is attributed to its desire to consolidate the political legitimacy of the Kim family – North Korea’s ruling family, alias the Mount Paektu bloodline – and overcome its diminished influence on the international arena after the fall of the second world in the 1990s. Therefore, the regime justifies its possession of nuclear weapons as an essential instrument of self-defense, often citing historical hostility with neighboring South Korea and the United States. Consequently, the various international organizations, including the United Nations Security Council and European Union, have agreed to impose several sanctions to address North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs by imposing a multitude of economic sanctions on North Korea. For instance resolution 1718 in 2006 banned the export of military equipment and luxury goods to North Korea while Resolutions 2371, 2375, and 2397 in 2017 limited the trade of resources such as crude oil, petroleum, and coal with North Korea. Such sanctions had a significant impact on the North Korean economy, which has already been suffering from extreme recession and instability since the 1990s, exacerbating poverty and food insecurity within the country. Notwithstanding such international efforts, the North Korean nuclear and missile program still stands as the most significant threat in the region.

Moreover, efforts to negotiate peace and denuclearisation have turned out to be failures. Summits between North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and former US president Donald Trump in 2017 and 2019 initially brought hope for denuclearisation, yet those eventually ended without any legally binding agreements and the breakdown of dialogue has since been followed by renewed nuclear testing and a more aggressive attitude of north Korea in the intermodal arena.

In recent years, the tension across the Korean peninsula has escalated, followed by the North’s continuous threats of war and the South’s reinstatement of radio broadcasting to North Korea (RBTNK). Therefore addressing the issue of denuclearisation remains the core of maintaining peace and stability in not only the Korean peninsula but also the world.

Stances of Parties

Australia

Australia is widely known for its support for the non proliferation of nuclear materials, including on the Korean Peninsula. As a close ally of the United States, the nation is assisting in pressuring North Korea via sanctions and diplomacy to prompt North Korea to withdraw their programs. Australia also partners with other nations such as South Korea and Japan to highlight the need for denuclearization in the Asia-Pacific region.

Brazil

Brazil is committed to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which establishes a nuclear-free zone across regions of Latin America. Thus, the nation opposes the proliferation of nuclear weapons and advocates for a nuclear-free zone in the Korean Peninsula as well. However, Brazil emphasizes national sovereignty and its non-intervention towards other countries, therefore the nation highly supports dialogues and diplomatic approaches to promote measures that address North Korea's security concerns.

Britain

As one of the five known nuclear-armed nations, the United Kingdom has been imposing strong sanctions on North Korea to prevent the use of nuclear weapons in North Korea. The nation believes in denuclearization as a part of establishing strong international cooperation and active diplomatic channels to achieve peace and security.

Canada

Canada supports international cooperation to halt North Korea's nuclear proliferation program as a part of its non-proliferation policy. The nation has been consistently imposing sanctions on North Korea while highlighting a non-violent approach to this issue. Canada participates in international forums regarding tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

China

China is one of the main allies of North Korea and an economic partner. Still, the nation supports North Korea's denuclearization through establishing a "dual suspension" strategy, which requests to cease nuclear programs in exchange for a cease in the United States-South Korea military programs. Concerned about humanitarian issues in North Korea, the nation is reluctant at imposing heavy sanctions upon them.

Cuba

Cuba has been supporting North Korea's sovereignty and its right to possess nuclear weapons from the past, viewing the sanctions and military reactions by third party nations as invasive to North Korea's sovereignty. Still, Cuba publicly opposes nuclear proliferation,

advocating for a denuclearization process that addresses not only the possession of nuclear arms but also security concerns of North Korea in relation to the deployment of US forces in South Korea. The nation also calls for peaceful negotiations, being highly concerned in regards to the escalating military aggressions on the Korean peninsula.

Egypt

Egypt maintains a neutral stance on this issue, while still supporting denuclearization across the Korean Peninsula. The nation's policy of the Non-Aligned Movement emphasizes the need for peaceful diplomacy and correspondingly, Egypt is not involved in the imposition of sanctions, but supports the United Nations resolutions that call for a nuclear-free zone.

France

As a state that possesses nuclear weapons and is a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the nation has been taking a firm stance against North Korea's nuclear program. France emphasizes the need to pressure North Korea to the fullest extent through sanctions and diplomatic activities between the United States and South Korea. The nation also believes that the denuclearization of North Korea should be accomplished in order to maintain international peace.

Germany

As a member of the European Union, Germany strongly supports nuclear non-proliferation although the nation is not a nuclear state. The nation has been imposing strict sanctions and urged diplomatic dialogues across various nations regarding this issue. Germany is in close alignment with South Korea and Japan in holding dialogues to reduce tensions and bring the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to overlook the disarmament process.

India

Similarly to other nuclear states, India also advocates for North Korea's nuclear disarmament. The nation believes that security concerns of East Asia should be resolved in order to promote global security, and to do this, the nation emphasizes the importance of peaceful negotiations. India has been devising international frameworks that could lead North Korea into a nuclear-free state without intervening their national sovereignty.

Indonesia

Indonesia is a member of the Non-Aligned Movement as a non-nuclear nation. Thus, the nation supports peaceful solutions such as dialogues. In addition, Indonesia believes that the North Korean denuclearization is a significant factor in achieving the security goals of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Iran

While Iran is also under close monitor of its nuclear program, the nation officially supports the North Korean disarmament measures. Iran has frequently highlighted the right of nations to peacefully use nuclear energy, while disagreeing with the use of nuclear energy into weapons. Therefore, the nation strongly supports regional approaches and diplomatic negotiations.

Iraq

Iraq's stance on nuclear disarmament in the Korean Peninsula is rooted in its own experiences with international scrutiny over weapons programs and disarmament efforts. Iraq supports global nuclear disarmament and calls for North Korea to comply with international norms. However, the nation also stresses the need to address the root causes of North Korea's nuclear ambitions, such as security guarantees and economic pressures. As a nation recovering from conflict, Iraq advocates for solutions based on dialogue and mutual respect.

Israel

Israel approaches the issue of nuclear disarmament in the Korean Peninsula cautiously, viewing North Korea's nuclear capabilities as a destabilizing factor in global security. While not a declared nuclear state under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Israel opposes nuclear proliferation, being particularly concerned about the potential transfer of North Korean weapons technology to non-state actors in the Middle East. Although Israel is geographically distant from the Korean Peninsula, it advocates for strong international sanctions to pressure North Korea into denuclearization.

Japan

As North Korea's neighbor and a close ally of the United States, Japan highly supports North Korea's denuclearization. Due to North Korea's missile threats, the nation has been deeply concerned with this issue, calling for sanctions and diplomatic efforts by the international community.

North Korea

North Korea, the nation which holds this committee's focus, has been insisting to retain its nuclear weapons and continue to use them despite diplomatic efforts by the international community. The nation has shown partial participation in negotiations such as the Six-Party Talks and summits with the United States, and has expressed partial openness to disarmament when the nation is guaranteed additional incentives in return. North Korea still considers its nuclear weapons program essential to its survival and sovereignty, maintaining that its nuclear arsenal serves as a deterrent to foreign intervention and regime change. The nation has expressed reluctance to complete nuclear disarmament without compromises, including the lifting of sanctions and security guarantees.

Pakistan

As a nuclear state, the nation remains supportive of non-proliferation efforts but respects the nation's right to own nuclear arms for maintaining national security. Pakistan is strongly encouraging North Korea to engage in dialogues to resolve international security concerns while believing in the need to seek balance between regional stability and sovereignty.

Palestine

Palestine is a non-nuclear nation and is involved in the Non-Aligned Movement. While the nation is not able exert much physical influence on the regions of East Asia, the nation's stance aligns with international norms in terms of nuclear disarmament, and agrees that a nuclear-free zone in the Korean peninsula is a significant step to achieve international peace.

Russia

Russia supports the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, but emphasizes a multilateral approach which still respects North Korea's security concerns. The nation views North Korea as a strategic buffer against U.S. influence, which is believed to increase tensions and support a process of gradual and reciprocal disarmament. Although Russia has limited direct influence over Pyongyang, Russia has sought to play a mediating role and promote negotiations through mechanisms such as the Six-Party Dialogue. The nation has also stressed the importance of maintaining balance between nuclear disarmament and regional stability to avoid military escalation.

South Africa

South Africa has a unique position on nuclear disarmament as the only country that has voluntarily abandoned its nuclear weapons program. This history gives South Africa an important moral authority in advocating for denuclearization. As for the Korean Peninsula, South Africa strongly supports nuclear non-proliferation efforts in line with global nuclear non-proliferation treaties such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The nation emphasizes the importance of diplomacy, calling North Korea and other nuclear-armed states to follow international norms towards disarmament.

South Korea

The Republic of Korea (ROK) views the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula as vital to its national security and regional stability. South Korea supports a peaceful resolution to the crisis. Initiatives such as the Inter-Korean Summit and the Panmunjom Declaration reflect South Korea's commitment to dialogue and reconciliation. However, the nation still relies on its alliance with the United States and supports sanctions to bring North Korea to negotiation. The Republic of Korea sees a stepwise approach to nuclear disarmament, along

with economic cooperation and confidence building measures to promote lasting peace on the peninsula.

Switzerland

Switzerland plays an active role in promoting peace and disarmament globally, including on the Korean Peninsula. As a host to various international organizations and peace talks, Switzerland emphasizes the need for dialogue and multilateral diplomacy to achieve denuclearization. Switzerland's humanitarian values align with its call for North Korea to prioritize the well-being of its citizens over its nuclear program, while simultaneously urging global powers to address North Korea's security concerns. Switzerland often offers its services as a mediator or facilitator for peace negotiations, supporting a peaceful resolution to tensions on the Peninsula.

Syria

Syria has historically maintained close ties with North Korea, often supporting its right to sovereignty and opposing what it views as Western interference in its affairs. Syria has cooperated with North Korea in various capacities, including military technology exchanges. As such, Syria is unlikely to openly condemn North Korea's nuclear ambitions. The nation views denuclearization efforts in the Korean Peninsula through the lens of protecting national sovereignty. However, Syria nominally supports peaceful dialogue to resolve the crisis.

Turkey

As a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the nation supports a nuclear-free Korean peninsula and the disarmament of North Korea. It highlights the need for holding peaceful negotiations as well as imposing appropriate sanctions to achieve security in the region.

United States of America

The United States views North Korea's nuclear program as a major threat to global and regional security. Particularly towards its allies South Korea and Japan, the United States supports the Complete, Verifiable, and Irreversible Denuclearization (CVID) of the Korean Peninsula. While supporting multilateral efforts through the United Nations, the United States has also emphasized its bilateral partnership to build pressure on Pyongyang. The nation remains committed to resolving the nuclear issue while insisting that nuclear disarmament must come before sanctions relief or security guarantees.

Vietnam

Vietnam encourages peaceful and diplomatic approaches towards mitigating the pressing issue across the Korean peninsula. Based on the nation's historical experience of

economic growth, Vietnam believes that a strategic economic support towards North Korea can help convince it into disarmament.

Possible Solutions

Solution 1: Phased Denuclearization with Economic Incentives

This solution involves a process of denuclearization coupled with economic incentives for North Korea. The first phase would require North Korea to freeze its nuclear weapon programs, allowing inspectors from international organizations such as the IAEA to verify compliance. In return, some sanctions on North Korea would be eased, and economic aid would be provided. Subsequent phases would involve the gradual dismantling of nuclear facilities and weapons, with corresponding increases in economic assistance and normalization of diplomatic relations.

To put this solution into action, a multilateral framework including North and South Korea, the US, China, Japan and Russia would be created. This team would manage the process, guarantee adherence and organize financial support. This framework would also incorporate measures for security guarantees for North Korea, alleviating its concerns regarding its national security.

Solution 2: Regional Nuclear-Free Zone Agreement

This solution suggests establishing a Northeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon Free Zone agreement. The agreement would include the Korean peninsula, Japan and possibly regions of China and Russia. All parties would agree not to develop or test nuclear weapons. This agreement would feature frequent inspections and verification measures conducted by an international organization.

In return for North Korea's involvement in the denuclearization process, the other signatories of this agreement would offer security assurances and financial aid. The US, China and Russia would possibly agree to protocols honoring the zone and committing to refrain from using nuclear weapons against any members of the treaty. This method would likely tackle North Korea's security issues while promoting a nuclear-free zone in the region.

Questions to Consider

1. How can the international community ensure North Korea's compliance with denuclearization efforts, considering its past records of breaking agreements and taking unilateral actions?
2. What roles would regional and international states play in facilitating nuclear disarmament on the Korean peninsula, considering its influence over North Korea and its own strategic interests?
3. How can North Korea's denuclearization be achieved without physical conflicts and the intervention of its national sovereignty?
4. Why is it a challenging agenda to achieve nuclear disarmament in the Korean Peninsula despite the urges of the international community for denuclearization?
5. What can be learned from the past efforts and summits for denuclearisation? Why did these succeed or fail?
6. What were the humanitarian ramifications of imposing economic sanctions on the North Korean populace?

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