



Article

North Korea-United States of America Nuclear Relations: The Role of the United Nations

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Abstract

Several attempts have been made by the United Nations to prevent the international community from the danger of North Korea nuclear weapons proliferation and tests. This paper examined the nuclear relations between North Korea and the United States of America and analysed the role of the United Nations as a mediator in this crisis. With the heightened tensions between the two countries, it has become necessary to understand the interplay between them and how the United Nations has been crucial in the resolution of the dispute. The paper adopted qualitative method of data collection. It employed historical research design and is built on Collective Security Theory. The paper found out that all efforts by the United States of America and the International community under the aegis of the United Nations to negotiate an end to North Korea's nuclear and missile development technology have been replete with periods of crisis, stalemate and tentative progress towards denuclearisation, and North Korea has long been a key challenge for the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. It identified some potential avenues for mediation in order to secure peace and ensure safety and security of the region. It further recommended a total security synergy cum approach to be adopted by the United Nations Security Council as the last resort in maintaining international peace and security.

Keywords

Denuclearization; North Korea; Nuclear Relations; United Nations; United States.

Introduction

North Korea's nuclear program can be traced back to 1962, when the government of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea committed itself to what it called "all-fortressization", which was the beginning of the hyper-militarized North Korea of today (Dominguez, 2015). Its nuclear ambitions came to the attention of the international community in 1992, when the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) discovered that its nuclear activities were more extensive than declared, which eventually led to the withdrawal of North Korea from IAEA in 1994. At the June 2018 United States of America-North Korea summit, Kim Jong-Un reaffirmed his firm and unwavering commitment to complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, although, North Korea's definition of denuclearization is ambiguous (Lewis, 2018).

Over decades, the United States has made several attempts to pressurise North-Korea in a bid to contain her potential threats to the global security; particularly, the security of the East Asia and most especially the South Korea (Park, 2001). As observed in Council on Foreign Relations (2022), the negotiations over nuclear and missile programme between the United States of America and North Korea have continued for decades; however none of these negotiations or all combined together was able to halt the advancement of North Korea nuclear weapons and missile programmes.

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Etymologically, North Korea-United States nuclear relations is rooted in the failed 1994 Agreed Framework between the United States and North Korea, under which the United States was to arrange for the provision of Light-Water Reactors (LWRs) with about 2000 Mega Watts generating capacity in exchange for North Korea's freeze and destroyed reactors. However, the United States delayed the construction of the Light-Water Reactors and suspended heavy oil shipments in the late 2002; and as a result of this, North Korea retaliated in January 2003 by announcing her withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty earlier signed by North Korea in 1985 (KCNA cited in Itumo, Nnaji & Nwobashi, 2020).

In a bid to end North Korea nuclear weapon programmes, the Six-Party Talks comprising of the United States, North Korea, South Korea, Russia, China and Japan was introduced in 2003. Nevertheless, the Six-Party Talks did not fulfil its purpose as the situation became worsened; the talks were halted and consequently in the late 2006, North Korea carried out her first nuclear test which resulted in the adoption of Resolution 1718 which forbids countries from transferring heavy military equipments, luxury goods among others to North Korea (Nuclear Threat Initiative, 2016).

Later, North Korea carried out an underground nuclear test in order to confirm her nuclear deterrent for self-defence and in response to this, the United Nations through its Security Council passed Resolution 1874 which restricted financial transactions and trade on North Korea. More so, in February 2013, North Korea carried out another test successfully; in response to this, the United Nations Security Council imposed sanctions that further constrained North Korean's travel, trade and banking. Despite all these sanctions resolution, another nuclear test was conducted by North Korea in January and September 2016 and the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 2270 and 2321 respectively to supplement the existing sanctions and expand more sanctions on North Korea. More so, North Korea conducted another nuclear test in September 2017; the nuclear weapons test resulted in severe sanctions against North Korea with the adoption of Resolution 2375 with restrictions on oil imports, textile exports and overseas labourers (Centre for Strategic and International Studies, 2017).

Up till now, no agreement on a method or timetable for dismantling North Korea's nuclear weapons has been reached. North Korea with the character of its leader thus, continues to pose a major threat to global peace and security (Lewis, 2018). As the years progress, with global security environment deteriorating, Pyongyang's nuclear and ballistic weapons agenda remains a clear threat to global peace and security. Consequently between 2018 and 2023, North Korea had continued producing new nuclear warheads and also vowed to produce more weapons-grade nuclear material to expand the military strengths of the country (Reuters, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

North Korea has for decades been at the spotlight of the global stage with her aggressive, isolated and tightly controlled command regime that has continued to threaten the security cum safety of lives in the world through her persistent nuclear weapons procurement and missiles tests. However, the United Nations as a globally recognized international organization has pursued varieties of sanctions on North Korea which includes, but not limited to financial and economic sanctions; all in a bid to preventing North Korea from advancing its nuclear and ballistic weapons programmes and tests. As the general mission of the United Nations, the organization through the Security Council (UNSC) has adopted nine (9) powerful sanction resolutions on North Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic activities among other sanctions from various countries. They include Resolution 1718 of 2006, Resolution 1874 of 2009, Resolution 2087 of 2013, Resolution 2094 of 2013, Resolution 2270 of 2016, Resolution 2321 of 2016, Resolution 2371 of 2017, Resolution 2375 of 2017 and Resolution 2379 of 2017. Each of the sanctions over persistent nuclear and ballistic missile activities served as strict warning from the global community to North Korea in order to make her desist from all illicit activities as regards to nuclear weapons proliferation and tests, which had violated previous United Nations Security Council resolutions.

In spite of the huge financial and economic effect of global sanctions from the United Nations and countries of the world, particularly, the United States; experts in the field say their effectiveness has been marred by the failure of a good number of countries to properly enforce them and the unexpected consenting position of some companies to flout them. Even though these sanctions were made stiffer, there are many questions as to whether the desired outcome will eventually be achieved (Albert, 2019). Nevertheless, the United Nations supervises the full implementation of all the sanctions imposed on North Korea through the 1718 Committee that was established by Security Council Resolution 1718 in 2006 and also a Panel of Experts Committee that was equally established by Security Council Resolution 1874 in 2009. This panel has been tasked to submit regular situation reports to the United Nations Security Council on the status of the sanctions and subsequently, its enforcement (Davenport, 2018).

Despite all the financial and economic sanctions cum regular intervention of the United Nations in checkmating North Korea's ballistic missiles test, North Korea has never desisted from the nuclear weapons procurement and missile tests thereby resulting in the failure of the United Nations to adequately check North Korea nuclear weapons' activities. It is against this background that this paper chronologically analysed the roles of the United Nations on North Korea nuclear relations and also, the impediments to the roles of the United Nations in checkmating the North Korea's nuclear weapons activities.

Literature Review

Nuclear weapons are obstacles to, rather than as facilitators of global security. Moore (2004), provided a clear and compelling account of where North Korea stood until 2014 on the issue of nuclear weapons, its readiness for weaponization, and the multivariate effects that its emerging position would have on its relationships with near and distant states as well as state responses to its operationality. However, Moore (2014) was reluctant to signal a massive change in the regional security environment as a result of North Korea's nuclear ambitions. The current security architecture of the region and the certain involvement of the United States of America in the case of hostilities initiated by North Korea offers confirmation for Pyongyang's claims that its nuclear weapons can deter an invasion by Japan, South Korea or the United States of America. However, the claim is nestled in a North Korean centric world view that one or more of those states are prepared to invade North Korea. On the contrary, it is precisely the conventional as well as nuclear capabilities and support of the United States of America and its allies in Asia that act as strong deterrence against North Korean hostilities. Accordingly, the most logical explanation for its pursuit of nuclear weapons is to deter what it perceives to be a United States of America's desire to overthrow its government with military force. However, the risk of selling or using its nuclear weapons is what spurs the United States of America into action.

The United Nations, acting under its special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security approved resolutions and sanctions as the strongest reprimand against North Korea. For some observers, the resolutions itself hold great symbolic importance because it demonstrates that the five permanent members of the Security Council are willing to compromise and find common ground, despite their differences (Lee & Choi, 2009). However, the divisions within the Security Council had contributed to making these resolutions, ultimately, toothless.

As stressed by Albrecht (2013), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has successfully provoked the United Nations with weapons proliferation in order to play the great powers against each other, gain the initiative in negotiating with the United States of America and Japan, portray itself as the legitimate defender of the Korean people, North and South; and test the attitude of the international community, particularly, the United States of America, toward itself. These four features are to be understood as layered on top of its usual strategy of bartering promises of non-proliferation in exchange for security assurances and aid. The United Nations current approach of matching these provocations with expanded but largely rhetorical sanctions has, unfortunately, played further into the hands of North Korea in a

multitude of ways. Resolutions and condemnations contribute to fulfilling both the North Korean strategic interests and its normative conditions. In essence, the more the government is chastised and isolated, the more it exploits and enjoys the grey area in the international legal system it has cut out for itself. According to Hayes & Bruce (2011);

Indeed, the DPRK has declared that it doesn't seek prestige or external recognition of its nuclear weapons status and stands outside all legal frameworks governing nuclear weapons. In effect, it has attributed to itself, a self-declared nuclear outlaw status. In response to the call by 189 countries at the 2010 NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) conference that the DPRK denuclearize and return to the NPT, it rejected any notion that it is beholden to the international community or its rules for governing nuclear weapons (Hayes & Bruce, 2011).

In line with the views of Hayes & Bruce (2011), it is an unfortunate fact that for the time being, an unaligned and disruptive North Korea is a win-win situation of a number of regional players. This fact is the strength keeping the North Korean government alive. North Korea taking note of this reality, tries to exacerbate the tensions that exist between China and the United States of America on the Security Council in order to perpetuate the conditions that make their state useful to both sides.

In the absence of an international sovereign authority, the compliance of member states with the Security Council's resolutions is a product of their willingness to acquiesce to and carry out the provisions contained there-in, along with the inability of the Security Council to enforce its resolutions directly in the absence of consensus on military action. Here, the political nature of the Security Council is evident in the negotiating process that takes place in the drafting of Security Council's resolutions and the calculations of member states in their choices regarding the degree to which they fulfil their obligations under specific resolutions (Solingen, 2012).

In contemporary international relations, sanctions are a means of settling disputes and attaining specific policy objectives often employed to reflect the dissatisfaction of certain members of the international community over another member's domestic or international behaviour. Shen (2010) notes that some critics argue that sanctions never work, whereas others think they serve to moderate undesirable behaviour, although often not entirely, effectively. Sanctions encapsulate a series of measures, including restrictions on imports from, exports to, and financial flows related to the target country (Hufbauer, Schott, Elliot & Oegg, 2009) for the purpose of changing the target country's behaviour, punishing the target country for past actions or strategic signalling to the target country and third parties, or as a gesture to placate domestic political audiences in sender countries (Eyler, 2009). For sanctions to be effective there must be pre-existing economic relationship between the sender and the target state through which the sender can exercise leverage over the target (Eyler, 2007). In their seminal study analysing over a hundred case studies, Hufbauer et al. (2009) found out that economic sanctions are likely to be successful when the economic and political costs to the target country of non-compliance with a sanctions regime outweighs the costs of compliance with the sender's demands. Sanctions regime tend to fail when the interests of the target state's government are engaged to such an extent that no level of economic punishment is sufficient to compel a target state to acquiescence to the sender's demands (Hufbauer et al, 2009).

Consequently, the sanctions regime does little to improve the economic position of the North Korean people as it stymies the opportunity for socio-economic transformation that economic liberalisation could present. For Eyler (2014);

The economic sanctions regime has hindered the proliferation of marketisation that would accelerate North Korea's economic liberalisation and improve the economic security of the North Korean people because of the obstacles sanctions present to foreign direct investment from sources beyond China (Eyler, 2014).

In an early study related to the United Nations Resolution 1874 of 2009, Haggard and Noland (2010) argued that the carrot-and-stick incentives embedded in this resolution were unlikely to succeed, given the salience of domestic imperatives driving North Korea's nuclear weapons gambit. Furthermore, the strong diplomatic signal to North Korea embodied in successive UNSC resolutions had been tampered by varying commitment to enforcement among regional states. The political compromises made to gain China's support for the resolution, in particular, limited the substantive, as opposed to the symbolic impact of the sanctions in the resolution.

Davies (2014) has subsequently argued that the financial measures in the sanctions, particularly with regard to banking and financial service institutions with connections to the North Korean government, have substantially upped the cost of North Korean activities, particularly its proliferation and weapons sales abroad, by tightening the web of sanctions around North Korea. If Davies (2014) is correct and the strangulation of this program is successful, North Korea should theoretically be forced back to the negotiating table in a weakened bargaining position, where the international community can press Pyongyang towards the denuclearisation objectives. Nonetheless, while world powers continue to pursue North Korea with sanctions, Albert (2019) is unclear whether the pressure will push Pyongyang towards denuclearisation.

The biggest challenge to these sanctions thus, is enforcement, which is the responsibility of individual states. Albert (2019) noted that national authorities often have insufficient resources to inspect shipments at ports of entry, carry out complex investigations and perform other enforcement activities. Some individuals and entities motivated by financial gains do business with North Korea outside the law and smugglers take advantage of lax inspections at ports in parts of Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Black market activities often go undetected as shipments elude customs scrutiny and official reporting.

As opined by Davies (2014), recent non-proliferation measures, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative and Security Council Resolution 1540 of 2004 are led by the very countries which hold nuclear weapons as an integral source of their own security. Furthermore, these initiatives are pursued in a context of abysmal progress on nuclear disarmament. As a result, non-proliferation is viewed as a goal for the nuclear mighty, leaving Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) to harp only on disarmament objectives of the treaty. This, Davies (2014) says, results in a false polarization, grossly demonstrated by the failed Third Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, with Non-Nuclear Weapon States on one end of the advocacy spectrum and nuclear-weapon states (NWS) on the other. In the end, progress is made nowhere and threats to global security are exacerbated.

A stable and peaceful international order requires controls on nuclear, biological, chemical and other types of weapons and dangerous sensitive materials as well as regulation of the behaviour of both state and non-state actors. However, there has been little progress in multilateral arms control in general and some processes have suffered severe setbacks. States now violate their obligations under arms control treaties which undermines confidence in the value of global arms control agreements as instruments for security building. Albert (2019) asked, when outlining the context in which Kofi Anan had established the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, with its report approximately, one-third of which was devoted to arms control issues; can the United Nations reassert its legitimacy and make itself effective enough to convince nations that it is actually capable of making the world a safer place? Reversing the progressive marginalization of the United Nations in the sphere of arms control can be regarded as one of the main requirements for this challenge.

Albrecht (2013) argues that this dynamic has been obscured by the highly technical discourse of security analysis that has managed to present the strategic situation of the Peninsula in a manner that attributes responsibility for the crisis solely to North Korea's actions, even if the situation is in reality far more complex and interactive. Regardless of what best explains North Korea's behaviour, her difficult nature

is presenting a major challenge to the United Nations and this has severely hampered efforts to resolve the nuclear crisis.

Methodology

This paper is qualitative and employed historical research design. It was hinged on the evaluation of available secondary data and general information to establish facts, trends and drew conclusion based on the arguments and views of different authorities in the field of nuclear proliferation and global security. Data were presented in tables and texts.

Theoretical Framework

The paper adopted Collective Security Theory. Collective Security as a theory for peace and power management is rooted in Cardinal Richelieu's proposed scheme for collective security in 1648 and subsequently reflected in Westphalia Peace of 1648 (Skirbekk & Gilje, 2001). Its exponents are, Immanuel Kants, Organski, Wright, among others. Collective security connotes an agreement between states to abide by certain norms and rules to maintain stability and when necessary bond together to stop aggression.

The theory of Collective Security advocates for political, regional and global security arrangement in which each state accepts that the security of one is the concern and responsibility of all; hence, commits to a collective response to threats to or breaches to peace. On this basis, the central argument of the theory rests on the universal obligation that all states synergise forces against a perceived aggressor state as soon as evidence of aggression is revealed (Itumo, Nnaji & Nwobashi, 2020). In view of this, the collective or cumulative actions of states will be sufficient and adequate to overpower the might of an aggressor and consequently, as a result of collective might, the aggressor will modify its policies or otherwise, be defeated.

The fitness of Collective Security in this paper rests on the fact that the theory presumes that all member states of collective security system are devoted to curtail and constrain any perceived or identified aggression with no regards for its source. In the view of the exponents of Collective Security theory, the collective cum cumulative efforts/power of the member of collective security system will be effective and efficient to conquer the might of the aggressor (Organski cited in Itumo, Nnaji & Nwobashi, 2020). As a result of this, the aggressor state or country will be forced to amend its decisions or otherwise, will be conquered due to collective might of the nations that may come as a result of the collective security coalition.

More so, Collective Security theory calls on the collective roles of the Security Council of the United Nations which is the maintenance of the international peace and security as established in the Article 24 of the United Nations Charter (Boulden, Thakur & Weiss, 2009). For this reason, it becomes the major role of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council to adopt collective security system ensuring a total denuclearization of North Korea. On this basis, North Korea (the aggressor state) will be forced to retract its policies, or otherwise, be conquered by the collective security of the permanent members of the United Nation Security Council.

Findings/ and Discussion

In the summer of 1950, the United Nations first intervened in the Korean Peninsula conflict after North Korean forces, backed by Chinese and the Soviet Union, invaded South Korea. After a unanimous vote from the Security Council on intervening, twenty-one members of the UN committed their troops and supplies to support South Korean military operations (Myers, 2019). Following strict UN guidance on troop intervention, President Truman justified the necessity of contributing troops into the peninsula as a combined United Nations military effort. This allowed for him to declare the conflict not as war, but as a United Nations led "police action" under directions of the Security Council allowing him to circumvent Congressional approval (Myers, 2019).

Upon establishment of the United Nations, Article One of the UN charter outlined the maintenance of international peace and security agreed upon by the Security Council. During this period, the Security Council condemned Soviet endeavours to spread communism to other parts of their neighbouring countries. During the Korean conflict, China was yet to be admitted into the United Nations and the Soviet Union vacated their seat in the Security Council. The absence of these two nations allowed the UN to enter the Korean Peninsula (Myers, 2019). Without the Soviet Union to veto any actions taken by the Security Council and the United Nation's substantial interest in the Korean peninsula, the Security Council found it easy to gain support to intervene in the conflict. The UNSC resolution which outlined the intervention in Korea asked for member states to self-determine their contributions to the conflict whether it was with troops, supplies, or both. Additionally, the Security Council asked the United States of America to take the strategic lead in the conflict by establishing a unified command for the conflict as it had the preponderance of strategic interest in the region (Goodrich, 1953). This was the United Nation's first intervention in North Korea.

For the UN, North Korea's signing of the NPT was considered a rhetorical win, but North Korea was ultimately a false-ratifier of the treaty (Myers, 2019). However, after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, many impoverished Soviet Nuclear scientists sought refuge in North Korea, bringing along with them substantial amount of classified technological information into the hermit kingdom (Goodrich, 1953).

In 1991, Washington pulled out its nuclear weapons from Seoul followed by the signing of the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Through the Declaration, Pyongyang and Seoul promised "not to manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy, or use nuclear weapons, as well as ban nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities" (Myers, 2019). It further mandated usage of bilateral inspections to ensure compliance of these standards. However, the North Koreans violated the agreement within a few years upon ratifying, and none of the conditions of the original Declaration were held to account. The lack of accountability was one of the biggest failures of the agreement, especially on the part of the United Nations (Myers, 2019).

World powers have pursued economic and financial sanctions on North Korea for more than a dozen years to pressure it to denuclearize. The United Nations Security Council has adopted nine major sanctions resolutions on North Korea in response to the country's nuclear and missile activities since 2006 (Davenport, 2018). Each resolution condemns North Korea's latest nuclear and ballistic missile activities and calls on North Korea to cease its illicit activities, which violates previous United Nations Security Council resolutions. All nine resolutions were unanimously adopted by the Security Council and all but Resolution 2087 (January 2013) contain references to acting under Chapter VII, Article 41 of the United Nations Charter (Davenport, 2018).

Below, is a table showing the list of the nine major sanctions resolutions as adopted by the United Nations Security Council on North Korea in response to her nuclear and missile activities since 2006.

Table 1: Nine (9) major sanctions resolutions as adopted by the United Nations Security Council on North Korea

S/n	Resolution	Principal Provisions	Principal Sanctions	Monitoring Mechanisms
1.	Resolution 1718 of October 14, 2006. After North Korea's first nuclear test on October 9, 2006	a. Orders North Korea to desist from any further nuclear or missile testing. b. Orders North Korea to return to the NPT. c. Decides North Korea shall put a moratorium	a. Member states are prohibited from the direct or indirect sale, supply, or transfer to North Korea, of: i. Heavy weaponry, such as tanks, armoured vehicles,	a. The resolution constituted a committee that was made up of the current fifteen members of the United Nations Security Council to act in the capacity of a

		<p>on all its ballistic missile activities.</p> <p>d. Resolves that North Korea shall relinquish its nuclear weapons programme in a verifiable, complete, and irreversible way.</p> <p>e. Orders North Korea to relinquish all its WMD activities.</p> <p>f. Beckon upon North Korea to go back to the Six-Party Talks.</p>	<p>large calibre artillery, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships and missile systems.</p> <p>ii. Spare parts for the above heavy weaponry.</p> <p>iii. Materials and technologies that could contribute to North Korea’s WMD programmes and ballistic missile related activities, as set out in prior Security Council documents.</p> <p>iv. Luxury goods</p>	<p>monitoring body to reassess and adjust the sanctions and possible violations of the sanctions. This committee was on every ninety days, expected to provide a report on the status quo of sanctions implementation.</p>
S/n	Resolution	Principal Provisions	Principal Sanctions	Monitoring Mechanisms
2.	<p>Resolution 1874 of June 12, 2009. After Pyongyang conducted a second nuclear weapons test, on May 25, 2009</p>	<p>The resolution reiterated a number of provisions from Resolution 1718. It also beckoned on Pyongyang to join the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.</p>	<p>Sanctions in Resolution 1874 which was established from several measures that were first laid out in Resolution 1718. The resolution broadened the arms embargo by placing a ban on all imports and exports of all forms of weapons, excluding just small arms (which ultimately required notification from the Security Council). Authorization was also given to member states to:</p> <p>a. Critically examine Pyongyang’s cargo on air, sea and land, if there were any suspicions that any of its consignments contained items that were proscribed and</p>	<p>The Resolution 1874 inaugurated a seven-member expert panel to offer some level of assistance to the sanctions committee in intensifying all the resolutions and following up on strict compliance. Known as the ‘Panel of Experts,’ the group was initially given a mandate for one year and was required to report regularly to the Sanctions Committee on possible violations and recommendations for improving implementation. Subsequent resolutions expanded on the command of the Panel of Experts.</p>

			<p>seize any of the materials or technologies if found to be in the prohibited list</p> <p>b. Proscribe all bunkering services for Pyongyang ships if there is a perceived reason to believe it is carrying contraband cargo. Also, the fifteen member states were equally beckoned to:</p> <p>i. Prohibit public financial support for trade with North Korea that would contribute to nuclear, ballistic missile, or WMD-related activities</p> <p>ii. Except in the case of humanitarian aid or development reasons, turn down fresh loans, grants or credits to Pyongyang.</p>	
S/n	Resolution	Principal Provisions	Principal Sanctions	Monitoring Mechanisms
3.	Resolution 2087 of January 22, 2013. After North Korea made another successful satellite launch on December 12, 2012	Resolution 2087 called for other states to “remain vigilant” in monitoring individuals and entities associated with the North Korean regime. It ordered the sanctions committee to roll out an Implementation Assistance Notice if any vessel refused to allow a mandatory inspection as authorized by its national state.	Resolution 2087 forged on the sanctions already in Resolutions 1718 and 1874 which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Clarifying the catch-all provision b. Clarifying the state’s right to seize and destroy material suspected of heading to or from North Korea c. Mandating the sanctions committee to take decisive steps to designate corporate entities and individuals who have 	There were no fresh monitoring mechanisms included in Resolution 2087.

			<p>aided in sanctions evasion</p> <p>Resolution 2087 also mentioned individuals who are now subject to asset freeze as well as the travel ban penalties, and entities that are now subject to asset freeze penalties, for violating the sanctions under Resolutions 1718 and 1874.</p>	
S/n	Resolution	Principal Provisions	Principal Sanctions	Monitoring Mechanisms
4.	Resolution 2094 of March 7, 2013. In response to North Korea's third nuclear test on February 12, 2013.	<p>Completely unlike previous resolutions, 2094 specifically mentioned Pyongyang's zest for uranium enrichment in its condemnation of her nuclear and ballistic test activities. Also, this resolution explicitly showed concern that;</p> <p>a. Pyongyang had flagrantly abused the immunities that were granted to its diplomats by the renowned Vienna Convention on Diplomatic and Consular Relations</p> <p>b. Accepted the Financial Action Task Force's detailed recommendations on targeted financial sanctions related to nuclear proliferation and called upon member states to enforce the recommendations</p>	<p>Resolution 2094 increased a good number of sanctions from previous resolutions, for example, by adding nuclear weapons and long or short range missile dual-usage technologies and also all luxury goods to the list of contraband imports. Resolution 2094 also indicated some individuals and entities for asset freezes and the travel ban and also expanded the red-flag criteria to include persons and entities that are suspected of acting as middlemen to those who have already been sanctioned. The resolution seeks to continuously stifle North Korea's efforts to making any form of progress in its nuclear</p>	<p>This resolution enlarged the number of panel of experts that assesses full compliance of the UN Security Council sanctions on North Korea to eight more people.</p>

			<p>and ballistic missile tests and programmes more difficult by hindering its access to foreign cash currencies and technological equipments it needs to construct weapons and continue its pursuit of uranium. The resolution further reinforced the powers of oversight and interdiction for its member states by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Beckoning on these member states to scrutinize and hold under custody any suspected cargo or shipments that are headed to or coming from North Korea that make transit through their territories, especially in the situation where the cargo has been suspected of carrying bulk cash or materials that could be used in the production of nuclear weapons. b. Directing states to enhance vigilance over North Korea’s diplomatic personnel c. New financial sanctions included in the resolution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. blocked the North Korea regime from bulk cash transfers ii. Confined North Korea’s relationships to international banking systems 	
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S/n	Resolution	Principal Provisions	Principal Sanctions	Monitoring Mechanisms
5.	<p>Resolution 2270 of March 2, 2016. This came following a fourth nuclear test and a second satellite launch by North Korea</p>	<p>Resolution 2270:</p> <p>a. Proscribed countries from giving any form of specialized training or teaching of citizens of North Korean in educational disciplines that could contribute to North Korea’s proliferation agenda.</p> <p>b. Stresses that Pyongyang has seriously failed to meet the needs of its people, but has rather, placed priority in its development of nuclear weapons, as well as ballistic missile programmes.</p> <p>c. Resolves that Pyongyang will forfeit all its biological and chemical weapons agenda and adhere to the binding principles of the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention</p>	<p>Resolution 2270 Hangs on sanctions measures from previous resolutions, including:</p> <p>a. Increasing the tenets of the arms embargo to also include light weapons as well as small arms</p> <p>b. Ban Pyongyang from servicing and or even repairing any form of weaponry sold to any third parties</p> <p>c. Proscribe more luxury items.</p> <p>Resolution 2270 equally expanded more inspection and interdiction powers for member states to:</p> <p>i. Obligatory inspections of all cargos with destination to North Korea or which originated from there too</p> <p>ii. A complete freezing of all assets belonging to North Korean government and also Worker’s Party entities who still indulge in prohibited activities</p> <p>Resolution 2270 also indicated an extra sixteen persons and twelve entities that stand to face penalties of asset freezes and travel bans. Fresh financial sanctions to place limits on all financial and banking</p>	<p>There were no fresh supervision mechanisms added to Resolution 2270</p>

			<p>activities of Pyongyang and its entities abroad including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Proscribing the United Nations member states from accepting to host North Korean financial institutions that obviously encourage its proliferation agenda b. Proscribe countries from opening bank branches or any form of financial institution in North Korea c. Expecting countries to end all existing bilateral ventures within ninety days of the adoption of this resolve. It also expects that United Nations member repatriate all North Korean citizens or other foreign nationals who may be working for the Security Council resolution-designated entity. Member states are also prohibited from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Chartering or leasing vessels to North Korea, or providing crew services to North Korea or North Korean entities ii. Stopping all business engagements in regards to sales and supply of aviation fuel to North Korea so 	
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S/n	Resolution	Principal Provisions	Principal Sanctions	Monitoring Mechanisms
6.	Resolution 2321 of November 30, 2016. After a fifth nuclear test by North Korea on September 9, 2016	Resolution 2321: a. Beckoned on all its members to cut down the number of staff at DPRK diplomatic missions and consular posts b. Excoriates North Korea for its pursuit of nuclear weapons rather than focus more on the welfare of its citizenry c. For the first time, the United Nations stresses the need for Pyongyang to respect the dignity of its citizenry	that it will not be diverted to its ballistic missile programme agenda Resolution 2321 enforced fresh sanctions that proscribed North Korea from: a. Exportation of zinc, nickel, silver and copper b. Selling statues c. Selling helicopters d. Transfer or sales of iron ore and or iron, with an exclusions for the purpose of livelihood e. All transfers or sales of coal in large quantities that exceed the approved annual cap. All UN members were also compelled to: i. Limit the number of bank accounts held by diplomats and missions ii. Placed a moratorium on all forms of technical and scientific collaborations with North Korea, except for medical reasons Resolution 2321 equally included more items to the list of proscribed dual-use technologies and increased the names of designated individuals and entities that are subject to asset	Resolution 2321 announced strict evaluation measures for the purchase of coal from North Korea and also monitors imports as against the limit approved by the resolution. The resolution subsequently ordered the Panel of Experts to carry out regular meetings that will not only build capacity to implement its tasks, but will also address potential regional concerns as stipulated in Resolution 2321 and several other sanctions placed on Pyongyang.

S/n	Resolution	Principal Provisions	Principal Sanctions	Monitoring Mechanisms
7.	Resolution 2371 of August 5, 2017. In reaction to the two North Korea's Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles tests in July, 2017	Resolution 2371: a. Regrets the pitiable decision taken by Pyongyang to divert a massive chunk of its already scarce resources towards the production of highly exorbitant ballistic missile programmes as well as nuclear weapons b. Reaffirms the Council's unadulterated assistance towards the Six Party Talks, while calling out for them to resume negotiations, strongly and unequivocally reiterate its support for all the agreements struck by the Six Parties, and vehemently reiterate the need for the Korean Peninsula and the entire Northeast Asia to experience a sustained peace and stability. c. Resolves that Pyongyang should desist from the deployment or use of chemical weapons and further beckons on her to assent to the Chemical Weapons Convention and strictly adhere to its tenets	freezes and the travel ban. Resolution 2371 consequently reiterated a ban on exportation of some materials that have been previously placed as contraband and which former resolutions had restricted the export of, including: a. Coal b. Iron and iron ore c. Seafood d. Lead and lead ore The resolution also: i. Adds new sanctions against some North Korean citizens and entities, including the Foreign Trade Bank (FTB) ii. Proscribed collaboration between North Korea and other countries iii. Gave approval to the Security Council to disallow international vessels who violate Security Council resolutions access to port iv. Bans nations from admitting more North Korean labourers	Resolution 2371 asked for the list of all North Koreans on the travel ban list to be published by Interpol. It granted the Panel of Experts more analytical materials for improved monitoring of sanctions enforcement.
8.	Resolution 2375 of September 11, 2017. Came shortly after North Korea fired its sixth nuclear	a. Reiterated a deep worry at the suffering and hardship North Koreans were being subjected to b. Excoriates Pyongyang for its zest to acquire	Resolution 2375 fully bans : a. Textile exports b. Caps refined petroleum product imports at 2 million barrels per year	a. Gave states more rules for states to conduct interdiction, not necessarily by employing force, if the member state suspect

	<p>test of September 3, 2017.</p>	<p>nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles rather than put the welfare of its citizenry first. c. Verified its tacit and undiluted support for the Six Party Talks, beckons on their resumption, while standing firm to its support for the efforts set forth in the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005 as rolled out by Beijing, Tokyo, Seoul, Warsaw and Pyongyang, and the United States.</p>	<p>c. Freezes the amount of crude oil imports d. Bans all natural gas and condensate imports e. Proscribes its member states from granting permissions for citizens of North Korean to work in their areas of coverage, unless in an event when it is otherwise, ascertained by the committee that established under the UNSCR 1718 f. Granted opportunity and asset freezes on more North Korean entities, including the Central Military Commission, Organizational Guidance Department and the Propagation and Agitation Department g. Directs the sub-committee of expert panel to label any vessel caught transporting contraband items from North Korea h. Proscribed all collaborative ventures or and the expansion of already existing ventures with North Korean individuals or entities. Resolution 2375 further included more items to the list of banned dual-use technologies and on</p>	<p>the vessel of carrying proscribed items . b. In an event where a suspicious shipment refuses the approved inspection exercise, the member state must direct that vessel to its port for thorough inspection or faces the chances of being designated for an asset freeze or port access denial.</p>
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S/n	Resolution	Principal Provisions	Principal Sanctions	Monitoring Mechanisms
9.	Resolution 2397 of December 22, 2017. In reaction to the ICBM which Pyongyang launched on November 29, 2017.	<p>a. Reiterated many of the binding principles as communicated in Resolution 2375.</p> <p>b. Validates the claims that North Korean funds its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes from revenue that is generated from its exports as well as from its citizens who work overseas.</p>	<p>select individuals and entities.</p> <p>a. Placed a benchmark for all refined North Korean petrol imports at five thousand barrels every year.</p> <p>b. Constituted an annual benchmark of importation of crude oil at four million barrels every year.</p> <p>c. Compel the United Nations Security Council to increase additional benchmark on petroleum imports if Pyongyang carries out any other form of ICBM or nuclear weapons test.</p> <p>d. Instruct all nations to expel all North Korean citizens who live and work with immediate effect or give them a maximum of two years to do so.</p> <p>e. Proscribes all food exportations, agricultural products, electrical equipment, minerals and machinery from North Korea.</p> <p>f. Further proscribed Pyongyang from importation of heavy duty machinery, transportation vehicles and industrial equipment, e.g. It listed an additional sixteen citizens and one</p>	Required that nations seize and impound any vessel or ships that are caught trying to smuggle contraband goods, including minerals like oil and coal

			entity to the United Nations sanctions list	
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Source: Philipp, E. (2018). UN Security Council Resolutions on North Korea. Arms Control Association. Retrieved 11/04/23 from <https://www.armscontrol.org/> 12:11pm.

Impediments to the efforts of the United Nations on North Korea’s nuclear activities

1. **North Korea’s advancement in domestic research:** Although, the previous sanctions of the United Nations on North Korea nuclear weapons activities slowed her procurement of some certain materials, nevertheless, with the advancement of domestic research, North Korea found other means in developing nuclear weapons through reverse engineering of old Soviet equipment and importation of old weapons (Salisbury, 2018). In essence, North Korea has earned enough research and development she needs for full nuclear weapons development. Based on this, no amount of global governance or pressure from the United Nations has been able to stop the willingness and capabilities of North Korea from procuring nuclear weapons.
2. **Lack of accountability:** Another major impediment to the efforts of the United Nations on North Korea’s nuclear weapon activities is the fact that North Korea as a defiant state has no accountability for her actions despite global governance of the United Nations. In essence, for about two (2) decades, North Korea has continued conducting successful launching of ballistic missiles, (with the most recent, being the Solid Fuel Intercontinental Ballistic Missile fired on 13th April, 2023) which the United Nations and its Security Council did nothing to stop except its use of ineffective sanction resolutions, warnings and condemnations of weapon activities. Unaffected by all these sanctions and condemnations, North Korea has continued to carry out different nuclear weapons activities because the United (Davenport, 2018).
3. **Over reliance of the United Nations on United States to curb North Korea’s ballistic and nuclear weapons activities:** This is another serious impediment to the efforts of the United Nations. Over the years, the United Nations has largely relied on the United States to curb North Korea’s nuclear weapons activities due to the strategic interest of the United States in the region (Albert, 2019). In essence, this has resulted in the failure of the United Nations to properly share intelligence and take actions on North Korea.
4. **Miscalculation of Soviet influence:** Another serious factor limiting the effort of the United Nations towards curbing the nuclear activities of North Korea is the fact that North Korea enjoyed strong relationship with bigger communist states in the first decade of existence upon the Armistice Agreement from the Korean War. As observed in Myers (2019), the United Nations miscalculated how the partnership between North Korea and other communist states would be critical in allowing North Korea to procure more nuclear weapons. However, the partnership resulted in a joint research agreement between North Korea and Soviet Union which gave North Korean scientists an opportunity to study in a foreign country to acquire technological information and facilities necessary towards rapid development of nuclear weapons.
5. **The recurrence of state primacy:** The failure of the United Nations effort on North Korea demonstrates a situation of recurrence state primacy. For instance, China sees North Korea’s existence as her priority and always prevents the failure of North Korea at all cost with little or no consideration to international norm cum governance (Albert, 2019).

Conclusion

The major thrust of this paper was to ascertain the role of the United Nations in the North Korea- United States nuclear relations and also the impediments to the efforts of the United Nations in curbing the persistent nuclear weapons activities carried out by North Korea over the years. From the foregoing analysis, it is evident that a lot of efforts majorly, sanctions resolutions have been made by the United Nations in curtailing North Korea’s nuclear activities. However, despite the litany of sanctions meted on North Korea, Pyongyang has refused to relent on its drive. This triggered the researcher to equally

ascertain the impediments to the efforts of the United Nations on North Korea's weapon activities. Since North Korea's nuclear weapon activities have defiled all responses made to curtail it and continued to threaten international security, an urgent solution is needed.

Recommendations

Based on the analysis and findings, the following recommendations are made;

1. Since all sanctions resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council on North Korea's nuclear weapon activities did not yield any significant result, non-military/non-sanction efforts should be considered towards denuclearizing North Korea.
2. There is an urgent need for the United States to withdraw her heavy military presence from South Korea in a bid to enable North Korea sign a non-aggression treaty with South Korea and other bordering countries.
3. More so, if North Korea defiles the above mentioned solutions, a total security synergy cum approach should be adopted by the United Nations Security Council as the last resort in maintaining international security and safety.

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