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Seventy-eighth year

Provisional

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meeting

Monday, 20 February 2023, 3 p.m.

New York

President: Mrs. Frazier (Malta)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil	Mr. Costa Filho
China	Mr. Dai Bing
Ecuador	Mr. Pérez Loose
France	Mr. De Rivière
Gabon	Ms. Koumby Missambo
Ghana	Mr. Agyeman
Japan	Mr. Ishikane
Mozambique	Mr. Fernandes
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
Switzerland	Mrs. Baeriswyl
United Arab Emirates	Mr. Abushahab
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
United States of America	Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield

Agenda

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Republic of Korea to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific in the Departments of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Khiari.

Mr. Khiari: According to its official news agency, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted what it described as an intercontinental ballistic missile launching drill on 18 February. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced that the ballistic missile, which it designated as Hwasong-15, flew a distance of 989 kilometres and to an altitude of 5,768.5 kilometres. It impacted in the sea within Japan's exclusive economic zone. The last time that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted a test of a missile of intercontinental range was on 18 November 2022. Earlier today, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted what it termed a launching drill involving two "tactical nuclear" rockets. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea again did not issue airspace or maritime safety notifications. Unannounced launches represent a serious risk to international civil aviation and maritime traffic.

The Secretary-General strongly condemns the launch of yet another ballistic missile of intercontinental range by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as its subsequent launches using ballistic missile technology. The Secretary-General reiterates his calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately desist from taking any further provocative actions, to fully comply with its international obligations under all relevant Security Council resolutions and

to resume dialogue leading to sustainable peace and the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

As per our earlier briefings to the Security Council, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to implement its five-year military plan unveiled during the eighth Party Congress, in January 2021. That plan provided for the development of new solid propellant intercontinental-range ballistic missiles, multiple warheads, better warheads, tactical nuclear weapons, a military reconnaissance satellite, new unmanned aerial systems, a 15,000 kilometre-range intercontinental ballistic missile and a hypersonic gliding flight warhead.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has repeatedly warned of so-called counteractions to military exercises carried out in the region. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea Foreign Ministry described the Security Council meeting of 16 February on non-proliferation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a "hostile act that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is bound to take due counteraction". Today's meeting reaffirms that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. This meeting also provides an opportunity to discuss practical measures for achieving a peaceful, comprehensive, diplomatic and political solution to the situation on the Korean peninsula.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea greatly increased its missile launch activities in 2022, including approximately 70 launches using ballistic missile technology. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea characterized those launches as involving systems with nuclear-weapon roles, including so-called tactical nuclear weapons. Most of the systems it tested are capable of striking targets on the Korean peninsula. It also tested systems capable of reaching parts of North America on two occasions last year and again on 18 February.

In September 2022, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea approved a new law that set out conditions in which it could use nuclear weapons, including pre-emptively in certain circumstances. A seventh nuclear test would be a flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions and undermine the international norm against nuclear testing. The Secretary-General remains firmly committed to achieving the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Looking ahead, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has clearly stated its intention to continue to pursue its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. During the sixth plenary meeting of the eighth Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, held from 26 to 31 December 2022, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea reiterated that it would exponentially increase its nuclear weapons arsenal, develop another intercontinental ballistic missile system and launch its first military satellite. During the military parade to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Korean People's Army on 8 February, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea unveiled a new apparently solid-fuelled intercontinental ballistic missile and at least 11 intercontinental ballistic missiles of previously known Hwasong-17 type.

The situation on the Korean peninsula continues to head in the wrong direction. Tensions continue to increase due to the negative action-reaction cycle, with no off-ramps in sight. The Secretary-General deeply regrets the divisions that have prevented the international community from acting on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as on other threats to peace and security around the world. The Korean peninsula must be an area for cooperation.

As previously stated, as the Council considers its options, there are several practical steps that could reduce tensions.

First, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea needs to take immediate steps to resume dialogue leading to sustainable peace and the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. That should include the Democratic People's Republic of Korea refraining from carrying out further launches using ballistic missile technology or nuclear tests.

Secondly, a comprehensive approach is needed. We welcome the Security Council's commitment to a peaceful, comprehensive, diplomatic and political solution to the situation on the Korean peninsula, as well as the importance the Council has placed on working to reduce tensions. Diplomacy, not isolation, is the only way forward.

Thirdly, it is critical to avoid an unintended escalation. Communication channels must be enhanced, particularly military to military. Avoiding

confrontational rhetoric will help to lower political tensions and create space to explore diplomatic avenues.

Separately, I wish to highlight once more our concerns regarding the humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United Nations is ready to assist the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in addressing medical and other humanitarian needs. To allow for a timely and effective response, we reiterate our call for the unimpeded entry of international staff, including the Resident Coordinator, and humanitarian supplies.

Let me conclude by reiterating that the unity of the Security Council on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is essential to ease tensions and overcome the diplomatic impasse. As the Secretary-General has said, while the primary responsibility for international peace and security rests with the Council, the Secretariat is its partner in that effort.

The President: I thank Mr. Khiari for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

The United States condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's 18 and 19 February launches of three ballistic missiles, which included the country's ninth intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch since the start of 2022. The ICBM was launched at a lofted trajectory and landed in the Sea of Japan. That sustained pattern of flagrant violations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of Council of resolutions explicitly prohibiting ballistic missile launches by the country demands a response from the Council.

There is no dancing around a simple fact: the resolutions that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is violating are ours; they came directly from the Council. We are charged with maintaining international peace and security. But in the face of unprecedented launches last year, two permanent members forced us into silence in spite of countless Democratic People's Republic of Korea violations. On this vital matter, silence leads to irrelevance. I call on the Council to condemn these ballistic missile launches. I call on the Council to urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with its international obligations under

all relevant Security Council resolutions. And I call on the Council to encourage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage in meaningful dialogue. At a minimum, those three points should be agreeable to everyone in the Chamber. After all, we are tasked with preserving international peace and security, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's repeated ballistic missile launches, coupled with its threatening rhetoric, is undermining just that. Our repeated failures to respond emboldens the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to conduct these destabilizing and escalatory launches without fear of consequences.

But this failure is not collective; it is specific. It stems from the two veto-wielding members of the Council who have repeatedly shut down all efforts at a meaningful response. They have blocked all of our attempts at robust responses, instead condemning any move by the Council to stand behind its own resolutions as provocative. As a result, the Council is failing to do its job.

It may be tempting to see this weekend's launch as a rebuke from Pyongyang, a warning to the Council that we ought to remain silent about its openly declared campaign to build an arsenal of nuclear weapons. The reality is that the last time the Council sent a strong, united message to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was in December of 2017, more than five years ago. When we did that, Pyongyang refrained from any major provocations for nearly five years. It also engaged in dialogue.

The reality is that those who shield the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from the consequences of its escalatory missile tests put the Asian region and the entire world at risk of conflict. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea showcased several ballistic missile systems, the development of which is banned by Security Council resolutions, at its recent military parade. Pyongyang paraded short-range ballistic missiles, Hwasong-17 ICBMs and an ostensibly new solid-propellant ICBM system. The regime also touted its tactical nuclear units. If two Member States continue to prevent the Council from carrying out its mandate, we should expect the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to continue to defiantly develop and test these weapons. The Council's lack of action is worse than shameful; it is dangerous.

Now is the time for the Security Council to work together towards a peaceful solution on the Korean peninsula, before it is too late. The Council must speak with one voice, as we did in 2017, to condemn

this escalating pattern of reckless provocation. To that end, the United States will again propose a presidential statement. We call on each member of the Council to join us in strongly condemning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's unlawful activities and encouraging the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage in diplomacy.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing today.

As we know, on Saturday the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) without warning. That is the third ballistic missile test this year and the ninth test of an ICBM since 2022. It reached an altitude of just under 6,000 kilometres, landing in Japan's exclusive economic zone. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea quickly followed that test with two additional short-range ballistic missiles today.

We condemn, in the strongest terms, this serious breach of Security Council resolutions, which clearly threaten international peace and security. We continue to call upon Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cease its illegal activity and to engage meaningfully with the offers of dialogue that the United States and the Republic of Korea have repeatedly made.

We believe the Security Council has an important role to play in addressing the international community's very serious concerns about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons and in supporting peaceful dialogue. That is despite the disagreements within the Council that have left us unable to respond to the worsening situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in recent years. It is the Council's responsibility to act when the resolutions adopted by it are ignored. We therefore welcome the United States proposal for a presidential statement on this issue and look forward to working with other Council members on the text.

We know that, while new missiles are displayed on the streets of Pyongyang, the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continue to face a serious humanitarian crisis. The investment in each of those missiles could feed many thousands of people. Despite that, there is international aid available. We urge the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to provide access for United Nations staff, to allow aid to flow freely into the country and to invest

in food and medicine for its people, rather than in its illegal weapons programme.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his updated information.

Here we are again at square one, a few days after our last meeting on Democratic People's Republic of Korea. At that meeting, some of our colleagues maintained that there was no reason to meet. The regime in North Korea, faithful to its notorious reputation, proved them wrong.

We strongly condemn the recent intercontinental ballistic missile launches. They seriously threaten regional and global peace and security. The fact that they flew into Japan's exclusive economic zone shows the lack of respect the regime has for anything, be it international law, rules, civilian aviation or its neighbours. By doing so, the regime is telling the world that it has decided to continue the same policies and actions of last year, to continue with provocations and escalatory measures and to develop an even more capable tactical weapons of mass destruction system and a more sophisticated ballistic missile programme.

What else would we need to agree and conclude that Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a clear, present and growing threat to the Korean peninsula and beyond? That its policies are a serious concern for the international community? That they must stop and be met with the right proportional response? The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has resolved to remain on the totally opposite path the Security Council has called for and is rushing on in its reckless behaviour. It is clear the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has chosen its attitude; it is now up to the Council to demonstrate if it has chosen its own.

We are left with the choice of acting, as we should, or continuing to tolerate a regime stubborn in its open defiance of agreed rules and in blatant disregard of Security Council resolutions. The dictator in North Korea must be laughing and proudly parading before his generals given that, even after more than 70 launches — all provocations — the Security Council has been muted and has not been able to utter a single word to condemn its reckless and dangerous policies.

We have said it before, and we reiterate it: the silence of the Council to the growing illicit activities is wrong, dead wrong. Because the Council has the responsibility act; not doing so erodes its credibility. Because the silence of the Council is counterproductive, as it only

emboldens the regime in its attitude. And because remaining silent means shielding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and encouraging similar rogue behaviours elsewhere in the world. It is high time, past due time, that we came out clear on this issue.

We also deplore the fact that the regime continues to starve its people by devoting its meagre resources to armaments, not to help millions of citizens in need, not to help the economy and support development. We also deplore the illegal cyberactivities the regime has continuously deployed, stealing money from anywhere they can to support its weapons of mass destruction programme. Today such illegal and unacceptable activities would have been under sanctions, had there not been a veto to save them.

The regime continues to reject talks and negotiations on the full, transparent and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. But we must not stop our efforts and continue to call on Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage into an unconditional and meaningful dialogue, for their benefit and their future. One day they will understand how wrong they have been in their paranoia, how much time they have unnecessarily lost and how backwards they will find themselves when the open-air prison comes to an end. Because, like every other of its kind, it will end.

Meanwhile, it is time for the Council to do its job, come together, be united and speak with one voice. Any other attitude does a disservice to the Council, its role and peace and security on the Korean peninsula and beyond. It also does a great disservice to North Korea and its people because it keeps them isolated and harbouring false illusions.

Mr. Pérez Loose (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his informative briefing. I also thank the President for convening this meeting at the request of several countries, including Ecuador, in the context of the new launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which reached Japan's exclusive economic zone.

In that regard, I wish to express Ecuador's strongest condemnation of this new launch, which defies the provisions of the Security Council and threatens regional and international peace and security by exacerbating tensions in a complex context.

We are alarmed by the signals from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it could be continuing

this year the same trend as last year, in which it launched at least 73 ballistic missiles, eight of which were intercontinental.

By its resolution 2397 (2017), adopted unanimously, the Council expressed its determination to take significant new measures in response to any new launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Council must therefore take urgent action at all levels to compel the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to halt its nuclear and ballistic missile programme in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

I wish to recall that in the light of paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council acts on behalf of the members of the Organization. I also recall that in the General Assembly meeting held on 8 June 2022 (see A/76/PV.77), the Member States, including Ecuador, sent a strong and targeted message of concern to the Council regarding the launching of ballistic missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and encouraging the Council to prevent the lack of response to continued violations of international law and its own provisions from affecting its credibility.

In conclusion, I reiterate Ecuador's call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply fully with all its obligations under international law and Security Council resolutions and to put an end to its launches, which undermine the disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

Mr. De Rivi re (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Khiari for his briefing.

France condemns in the strongest terms the resumption of ballistic missile launches by North Korea. The launch of a Hwasong-15 intercontinental missile towards Japan's exclusive economic zone last Saturday, as well as the firing of two new ballistic missiles yesterday, constitute an unacceptable provocation.

Never before has North Korea fired so many missiles, including intercontinental missiles. Never before has North Korea developed such powerful and sophisticated delivery systems, as demonstrated by the 8 February parade. Never has it displayed such aggressive nuclear rhetoric. Relentless enrichment activities continue at Yongbyon, and a seventh nuclear test is reportedly being prepared at Punggye-ri. Let us face it. The current escalation is dangerous. And the question is very simple: can the Council accept North Korea becoming a nuclear State?

Every launch defies the authority of the Council and violates its resolutions. Nevertheless, we remain disunited and silent. This has become the norm on this issue. I say this in all seriousness: our division provides North Korea with a cover to continue its provocations. Not acting today means risking the destabilization of the peninsula, allowing violations of international law to take place and running the risk of proliferation becoming commonplace and resurfacing tomorrow in other regions of the world.

In the face of such provocations, it is imperative to enforce the sanctions regime. It is unacceptable that North Korea continues to steal industrial secrets and hundreds of millions of euros in cryptocurrencies to strengthen its weapons programmes at the expense of its own people. We urge all Member States to fully implement all international sanctions adopted unanimously by the Council.

France calls for a resumption of political dialogue without preconditions. All actors in the region must be involved. North Korea must take up the proposals made in that regard and return to the negotiating table in good faith. Our goal remains unchanged: the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of North Korea.

These new provocations require a united and resolute response from the international community. France will not resign itself to North Korea becoming a nuclear Power. It will spare no effort to ensure that the Council responds to this unprecedented escalation.

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): I thank Mr. Khaled Khiari for his briefing.

I must begin by expressing my greatest regret that North Korea once again launched an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) followed by two ballistic missiles yesterday. The ICBM impacted in the Japanese exclusive economic zone, just 200 kilometres from Hokkaido, as was the case on 18 November and 24 March last year. As has been reported by the media, ordinary Japanese citizens could visibly see the ballistic missile falling from the sky. I assume we can all imagine how terrifying it must have been for people to see a missile flying towards them. It also endangered vessels in our exclusive economic zone and exposed aircraft in the surrounding area to great risk. These actions are totally unacceptable and violate multiple Security Council resolutions. Japan strongly condemns these dangerous and outrageous actions.

All of us are aware that, unfortunately, North Korea publicly articulated its intention to continue its unlawful development of weapons of mass destruction, including the mass production of tactical nuclear weapons and an exponential increase of its nuclear arsenal, meant to be delivered via ICBMs. All such measures are violations of Council resolutions. These are the core problems we are supposed to deliver on.

Let me make three important points.

First, the Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. No one can disagree that firing an ICBM into the exclusive economic zone of another State is a matter of peace and security. It is not a matter of self-defence, as claimed by Pyongyang, but an act of intimidation and threatening by force.

Secondly, the Council should be responsible for observing its own established rule — the Security Council resolutions. Silence should not be the answer for violations of resolutions. The Security Council should fulfil its own obligations and should not undermine its credibility.

Thirdly and lastly, North Korea says that the Council should stop discussing this issue. It clearly stated that it has never recognized such resolutions of the United Nations and will also not accept them in the future. Some also argue that the discussion in the Security Council provokes North Korea, and hence we should remain silent. That is wrong. If we remain silent for fear of further provocations, that will only encourage rule breakers to write the playbook as they like. We need to think about what we can and should do. Is that not the task of this organ mandated by the Charter of the United Nations? We are meeting here because it is our duty to deal with the clear threat to international peace and security.

Let us make it crystal clear: responsible Council members should not reward such unlawful and unjustifiable attempts to force the Council to stop doing its job. Through the discussions that we had recently, an increasing number of Council members shared concerns over what was happening and wished to take proactive action. It is time that the Council be united and firmly stand against the challenge to its credibility. In that regard, Japan strongly supports the draft presidential statement proposed by the United States as a step forward, while standing ready to work with colleagues to adopt more robust actions.

In conclusion, Japan once again urges North Korea to immediately and fully comply with all the relevant resolutions, engage in diplomacy towards denuclearization and accept the repeated offers of dialogue by the countries concerned. Let us, the Council members, continue to fulfil our responsibility.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has been closely following the development of the situation on the Korean peninsula, in which tensions and confrontation have once again become prominent and may escalate in an upward spiral. That does not serve the interests of any party, and neither is it something that China wishes to see. We call on all the relevant parties to remain calm, exercise restraint and stay committed to the right direction of a political settlement, while refraining from any action that may further exacerbate tensions and lead to miscalculation.

To facilitate progress on the Korean peninsula issue, we should first focus on the crux of the issue, which is in essence about security. In the absence of a transition from the armistice to a peace mechanism on the peninsula, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has long faced tremendous security pressure, challenges and threats. Since the beginning of this year, the United States and its allies have stepped up joint military activities around the peninsula, targeting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United States announced an increase in the level and scale of joint military exercises and the timely deployment of strategic assets. The NATO Secretary-General paid a high-profile visit to countries of the region, where he promoted a Cold War mentality and bloc confrontation. Such moves are highly provocative to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and exacerbate its sense of insecurity. The countries concerned should seriously reflect on the relevant causality.

China calls on all the relevant parties to squarely face up to the history and reality of the peninsula issue, draw lessons from past experiences and remain committed to the right direction of dialogue and consultation. Under the current circumstances, it is all the more vital to prevent a vicious cycle of repeated escalation, thereby driving the situation out of control. Certain countries in particular should give up geopolitical manipulation, stop the clamour about war and refrain from resorting to pressure at every turn through military exercises and sanctions, among other things, in order to create a conducive environment for a political settlement. Since the United States has repeatedly expressed its

willingness to unconditionally engage in dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it should take concrete steps to start and maintain the dialogue.

The Security Council should play a constructive role in promoting a breakthrough on the peninsula issue. The current situation on the peninsula is extremely sensitive and complex. The actions and discussions of the Council should help to ease the situation and enhance mutual trust. The words and deeds of Council members should help to maintain stability, prevent chaos on the peninsula and help to restart dialogue and negotiation and resolve the real humanitarian and livelihood difficulties faced by the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Regrettably, in the absence of consensus, some Council members have recently continued to push for meetings on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue and to call for more sanctions and pressure on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That neither embodies the constructive role of easing the situation nor brings about new ideas that are conducive to resolving the problem. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea also issued a statement expressing its strong dissatisfaction.

I wish to reiterate that Council resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are an integral part of the process, which not only provides for sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea but also clearly calls for resuming the six-party talks, preventing an escalation of tensions and promoting solutions through political means and dialogue. Implementing sanctions and promoting the resumption of talks are both ways to implement the Council's resolutions. One should not outweigh or replace the other, and neither can they be implemented only selectively. The unilateral pursuit of sanctions and their constant increase will only ultimately result in a dead end.

In order to facilitate a way out of the predicament regarding the Korean peninsula issue, all parties should adopt the right approach to non-proliferation and avoid double standards. The United States and the relevant countries push for discussing the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue, while shirking their responsibilities by blatantly engaging in nuclear cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, which contravenes the purposes and objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and will lead to the proliferation of weapon-grade nuclear materials. They even seek to replicate nuclear sharing in the

region. Are such acts not blatant nuclear proliferation? Such a selective approach to non-proliferation will not only cause a serious and negative impact on the denuclearization on the Korean peninsula, but will also significantly increase the risk of triggering military confrontation in the region, which merits our extreme caution.

The peninsula is right on China's doorstep. China sincerely hopes for stability, rather than chaos, on the peninsula, and does not wish to see the peninsula issue descend into a vicious cycle. On this issue, China has always stood for maintaining peace and stability on the peninsula, achieving its denuclearization and resolving the issue through dialogue and consultation. China calls on all parties to exercise reason and restraint, take into account the overall situation of maintaining regional peace and stability, follow the dual-track approach and phased and parallel principle and jointly promote the political settlement of the peninsula issue. China stands ready to play a constructive role in that regard.

Mr. Abushahab (United Arab Emirates): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing. I welcome the participation of the Republic of Korea in today's meeting.

Two nights ago, the people of Hokkaido were put in grave danger by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's most recent illegal intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch, which landed off the coast of Japan. Since then, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has launched another two ballistic missiles. The United Arab Emirates strongly condemns those most recent provocations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

In less than one year, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has launched more than 70 ballistic missiles, including nine ICBMs, each in violation of Security Council resolutions. We stand in solidarity with the people of Japan and the people of the Republic of Korea, who continue to suffer first hand the fear and anxiety resulting from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's reckless and provocative behaviour. The Democratic People's Republic's behaviour is not only threatening its neighbours; its reverberations are global, as proliferation anywhere undermines stability and security everywhere.

As the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to choose the path of escalation, the United Arab Emirates remains deeply concerned at

the heightened nuclear rhetoric in the region and the prospects that the Democratic People's Republic will conduct a seventh nuclear test. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respect international law, abide by the Security Council's resolutions and return to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The Security Council must protect the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture from further erosion and flagrant violations. Despite the establishment of a stringent sanctions regime by the Council, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has continued in its development of an illegal nuclear-weapons programme. The Council must address and combat the new methods by which the Democratic People's Republic finances its illegal weapons programme and must simultaneously ensure that all Member States faithfully implement the sanctions already in place.

Regrettably, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to prioritize proliferation and escalation over the urgent humanitarian needs of its population. We urge the Democratic People's Republic to cooperate with the United Nations and the international community to alleviate the dire humanitarian situation affecting its people and allow humanitarian assistance to resume within the country.

It is time for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its threats and intimidation and return to dialogue, and it is time for the Security Council to speak with one voice on this file. The status quo is both dangerous and unsustainable.

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his briefing to the Security Council and welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea.

We continue to be gravely concerned by the escalating tensions on the Korean peninsula and the wider North-East Asia region following the latest launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and two short-range ballistic missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which it claims was in response to the ongoing joint military exercises between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

The current ICBM launch, which is reported to be a Hwasong-15, comes on the heels of the launches last year alone of another 8 ICBMs and at least 73 ballistic missiles and missiles combining ballistic and guidance technologies, all in clear violation of several Security

Council resolutions. Ghana firmly deplores this present launch and others before it, and we reiterate our call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions, refrain from further ballistic-missile launches, and return to compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

We must acknowledge that the instruments of influence that the Council has wielded thus far, particularly its existing resolutions on the matter and sanctions, have not been fully successful in stopping the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's weapons programme or eliciting its cooperation. As a Council, we must recommit to our common objectives and pursue the goals that are required to achieve concrete progress in furtherance of peace and security on the Korean peninsula.

Throughout the Council's meetings last year on this issue, and particularly during the two consultations this year, there have been very strong calls by all Council members for the Security Council to be unified. We must therefore aspire to respond to the developments in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a different manner by modifying our approach and unifying our efforts.

In that regard, we reiterate our call for the Council, together with all the relevant stakeholders, to begin the important task of rebuilding trust, solidarity and mutual respect through dialogue and diplomacy. We hope that the paths of mediation, which the Secretary-General also has at his disposal, will not be closed but rather prioritized for the objective of the complete, general and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

On sanctions, we note that they are an important tool in the toolbox of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. However, sanctions are not an end in themselves. We must address the unintended consequences of sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a swift and all-around manner. It is also important to thoroughly evaluate the Democratic People's Republic of Korea sanctions regime to better understand the gaps that have enabled sanctions override and facilitation of its nuclear-weapons programme without hindrance.

In conclusion, we must be reminded of the strength that lies in the unity of the Council. Collectively, we have been entrusted with a powerful mandate by the

architects of the present order to act on behalf of all Member States to maintain international peace and security. This places a unique and heavy responsibility on all members of the Security Council, not to only reflect immediate national interests, but to work collectively in the global interest. We urge that we remain bound together by this objective as we pursue the business of working collectively in the global interest in furtherance of durable peace and security on the Korean peninsula.

Mrs. Baeriswyl (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I would like to join others in thanking Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his briefing. The launch of intercontinental ballistic missiles and the remarks of the Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea are particularly disturbing developments. They add to the escalating rhetoric and security tensions in the region.

The steady pace of North Korea's nuclear programme and its impact on non-proliferation and international security are a threat to the entire international community. The catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons must spur us to redouble our efforts to promote non-proliferation, disarmament and the maintenance of the nuclear taboo. It is in the interest of all of humanity that nuclear weapons are not used under any circumstances. We welcome the reminder by the five permanent members of the Security Council that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, as Director Wang Yi reaffirmed at the Munich Security Conference.

Switzerland has followed with concern the increase in ballistic-missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in recent months, as the country develops an increasing number of nuclear delivery systems. It is important that the Council is meeting today on this subject. We reject any characterization of our meetings and deliberations as a provocation to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We cannot shirk our duty and responsibilities in the following areas.

First, in the area of nuclear non-proliferation, it is our collective duty to condemn the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's ballistic-missile tests. These launches are in violation of Security Council resolutions and therefore of international law. Switzerland urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to implement its obligations under the Council's resolutions and take concrete steps to abandon its nuclear weapons, ballistic

missiles and related programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

We call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to rejoin the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to return to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards as soon as possible. We also call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as all other Annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We recall that while the obligations under the relevant resolutions apply primarily to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, they also apply to all States insofar as they are required to ensure and enforce effective implementation of the relevant Security Council sanctions.

Secondly, in the area of sanctions implementation, Switzerland welcomes the Council's increasing attention to ensuring that humanitarian assistance remains possible. The Council demonstrated its commitment and unity two months ago by adopting resolution 2664 (2022), which must be implemented. The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) plays an essential role in facilitating humanitarian assistance through a system of exemptions. This mechanism is now complemented by a humanitarian exemption applicable to all sanctions regimes. We therefore hope that once the severe restrictions on international humanitarian support related to the pandemic are lifted by the Democratic People's Republic, humanitarian support can resume quickly.

Thirdly, the Council has a role to play in encouraging dialogue, de-escalation and the quest for diplomatic solutions. For now, its prolonged silence is not only a cause for concern but is preventing progress on political action on the Korean peninsula. However, as we have all heard in various statements, the collective and individual will to lead and support a dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea does exist. We encourage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage with the Council constructively. The call for dialogue would be stronger if it were anchored in a united position. Switzerland will support every effort to achieve unity within the Council, which must stick to its initial ambitions and shoulder its responsibilities.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): At the outset, I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing and for his tireless work on this file.

Brazil condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on Saturday morning in the strongest terms. Not only was the test in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, it posed unacceptable risks to maritime and air safety due to the lack of appropriate warnings. Moreover, any miscalculation or malfunction could have had lethal consequences for people in Japan, including the significant Brazilian community in that country.

We are gravely concerned about the situation on the peninsula. The security situation has been deteriorating in the last few years, but the past year has been of especial concern. We have witnessed a spiral of distrust and a negative action-reaction cycle that have greatly increased the risk of escalation and made every country in the region less safe. It is no exaggeration to say that this may be the period of greatest risk since 2017. Then as now, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was rapidly advancing its missile programmes and testing its first ICBMs. Then as now, shows of military force and escalating rhetoric increased the risk of unforeseen consequences and made all of us less safe.

How did we interrupt that negative cycle then? We stepped back from the brink by acting on two fronts. First, we showed Council unity. As has been pointed out here before, we were able to adopt resolutions reinforcing the Council's authority and condemning actions that violated international law. Secondly, diplomatic efforts were driven and supported by several countries. Brazil was a vocal supporter of that process, and we believe that a new process of engagement is at least as urgent now as it was at the end of 2017. Only by acting on those two fronts were we able to defuse a cycle of escalation and interrupt one of the most dangerous periods in the history of this file. Once again, we must be able to condemn unlawful action and to support initiatives that could lead to a resolution of the issue. A sustained, comprehensive political process remains the best chance of delivering on our goal of a peninsula that is peaceful, stable and free of nuclear weapons.

Starting a new process is never easy. All the parties will have to exercise self-restraint, and restraint involves costs. Yet the costs of not engaging are unacceptably high and growing higher by the day. Doing nothing, or believing that pressure alone can solve the problem, means resigning ourselves to a spiral of nuclear escalation with truly global implications. I urge all

members of the Council to find the political will that can enable us to step back from the brink once again.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Mr. Khiari for his briefing.

Russia is opposed to any military activity that threatens the security of the Korean peninsula and the countries of North-East Asia. Our position on the matter is well known. Time after time we have underscored the need for all parties to show restraint and take practical steps affirming their willingness to resume a dialogue in line with the agreements already reached and the commitments already made. Instead, however, we are witnessing a sharp increase in military activity in North-East Asia that will only aggravate the situation and make the prospects for a political and diplomatic settlement of the issues on the Korean peninsula more distant. We have consistently supported a holistic consideration of the issues and believe it is essential for the Security Council to take every factor into account in its discussions and consider the steps that the States involved are taking if it is to have a complete picture of what is happening.

Today, for example, we have heard a lot about the missile launch, but there has been no attention to the fact that on the eve of the launch the authorities of the Republic of Korea and the United States announced the holding of staff exercises, which according to media reports included a visit to a port where American nuclear-equipped submarines are stationed, as well as the Freedom Shield field exercises, to be held in March. The very day after the launch, the United States and the Republic of Korea organized joint air drills involving strategic bombers.

Those are just a few examples of the continuing evolution of the situation in the subregion as a vicious circle. Last week, in a new edition of its defence doctrine, its so-called white paper, South Korea's Ministry of Defence termed the Democratic People's Republic of Korea an "enemy", with reference to a similar definition for the Republic of Korea announced in December 2022 by the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea. In response to the unprecedented and clearly anti-Pyongyang military manoeuvres by the countries of the region under the umbrella of the United States, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is conducting missile tests. Any further ratcheting up of the spiral of escalation will take us ever closer to a dangerous point beyond which events could get completely out of control. We deplore the fact that the United States and

its allies ignored the steps that Pyongyang undertook in 2018 and 2019 and whose implementation could have brought about a major improvement in the situation in the subregion. The position of a number of countries at that time also prevented the Council from assisting the process of detente. Pyongyang's subsequent repeated calls on Washington to cease its hostile activity and refrain from ramping up the pressure were also ignored and various opportunities for dialogue missed.

We have repeatedly pointed out the special responsibility that Washington and its allies bear in the current situation. The desire to force the Democratic People's Republic of Korea into unilateral disarmament with the help of sanctions and high pressure based on the concept of so-called extended deterrence will not yield the results that Washington is apparently expecting. As a result, we are hearing only increasingly belligerent rhetoric that is unfortunately being backed up with real-world actions.

This is clearly a dead end that presents a direct threat to international peace and security. We continue to hope that the quest for a path to de-escalation through negotiations will replace the current escalatory trend. Once again, we want to remind the Council that there can be no alternative to a multilateral political and diplomatic process aimed at creating a framework for peace in North-East Asia that takes account of the legitimate concerns of all the States in the region and aims to provide them with reliable security guarantees. We are ready to work for that and would like to point out once again that Russia and China have developed a plan of action for a comprehensive settlement of the situation on the Korean peninsula that involves concrete steps by the States concerned in one direction or another.

I would like to also recall that Security Council resolutions on the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea also sought a political and diplomatic solution. We are disappointed by the fact that every time those resolutions are mentioned, we hear only about their sanctions-related aspects, even though it has long been obvious that the policy of increasing sanctions pressure on Pyongyang is futile in form and inhumane in nature and must end. The negative cumulative effects of international and unilateral restrictive measures, which exacerbate the difficult situation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, are growing exponentially.

Furthermore, the constant Security Council meetings on issues related to North Korea that are held

when some Council members are not ready to engage in constructive dialogue and want only to criticize the country do not help to resolve the situation. Those countries show extreme selectivity with regard to what the Council supposedly should or should not discuss. The objective of defining the steps that the Security Council could take to facilitate the search for a peaceful solution through negotiations is totally absent from the agenda of the meetings on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea those countries request. We call on Security Council members to finally pool their efforts to pursue that objective. We underscore once again that the Russian-Chinese political and humanitarian draft resolution (S/2022/431) is on the table, and its adoption could help us attain that objective.

Mr. Fernandes (Mozambique): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his briefing. I also wish to welcome the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Throughout history, humanitarian catastrophes have compelled us to take action to prevent further suffering, deaths and atrocities. Just to take one example, the 1925 Geneva Protocol and the subsequent banning of chemical and biological weapons was a direct response to the use of poison gas in the First World War. However, nuclear weapons are, for lack of better words, in a league of their own when it comes to their destructive power and the scale of human suffering they can unleash.

We are all too familiar with the catastrophic and long-lasting consequences for human health, the environment, the climate and food production, as well as the social upheavals those weapons can cause. We are concerned by the growing number of States having such weapons and the real threats that could arise one day should non-State actors acquire such weapons of mass destruction.

We live today in a world confronted with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. An estimated 1,800 nuclear warheads remain on high alert status, ready to be launched, further amplifying such risks. Moreover, persistent competition among producers of nuclear weapons exacerbates the precarious situation the world finds itself in, owing to the number of crises we face currently.

Mozambique is deeply concerned by the escalation of tensions on the Korean peninsula and in the north-eastern region of Asia as a whole. We call for the

strengthening of collective actions to ensure the total elimination, if not eradication, of nuclear weapons. We owe it not only to ourselves and our own common security, but also to future generations. What the world needs right now is more political compromise, dialogue and negotiations, not more weapons of mass destruction.

The maintenance of peace and security was the main reason behind the creation of the United Nations. Mozambique, as a peace-loving nation, supports all initiatives under the aegis of the United Nations conducive to reducing or eliminating nuclear weapons globally.

Tensions on the Korean peninsula are the highest they have been in years because of the shadow of the threat of nuclear weapons. We face a real risk of conflict on the peninsula if we do not take measures to prevent a nuclear disaster.

We wish to recall that the year 2016 was a watershed moment. The Security Council, including China and Russia, unanimously adopted two resolutions, namely, resolutions 2207 (2016) and 2321 (2016) in March and November 2016, respectively. Those resolutions imposed the most comprehensive sanctions on North Korea in response to its fourth nuclear test. Therefore, Mozambique calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with those Security Council resolutions. We also request other actors to refrain from producing and potentially using nuclear weapons. In the same vein, we call on the Security Council to engage robustly in serious and credible dialogue aimed at the de-escalation of tensions on the Korean peninsula.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate Mozambique's firm commitment to pursuing all measures and policies that defend and promote global peace and security.

Ms. Koumy Missambo (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his briefing, and I welcome the participation in this meeting of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea carried out a new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch last Saturday and two medium-range ballistic missile launches this morning. We condemn those missile launches.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's regular launches are a challenge to the Council's role as a guardian of international peace and security, but also a

challenge to the Council's ability to use all mechanisms at its disposal to stem that large-scale threat to security on the Korean peninsula and in the world.

Every Council meeting must be viewed as an opportunity to consider viable and lasting consensus solutions for de-escalation and to ease tensions on the Korean peninsula. Common ground must be found to bring the parties back to the negotiating table. Maintaining the status quo means taking the risk that a catastrophe or potentially disastrous consequence could occur. No country should live under the constant threat of a nuclear accident.

The parties must show their commitment to resume negotiations in good faith. We remain convinced that the solution can be found only through dialogue.

Pursuing the current logic would send the wrong message, namely, that there is no alternative to sanctions, and we know that is not the case. My country urges countries in the region and those with any influence whatsoever to do everything possible to renew the path of dialogue and to remove the obstacles standing in the way of a return to calm on the Korean peninsula.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Malta.

I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his insightful and sobering briefing.

Malta is deeply concerned by the launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) on 18 February, which landed in the waters of Japan's exclusive economic zone and was even visible from the Japanese mainland.

Malta is also deeply concerned by the further launch of two short-range ballistic missiles early this morning. Malta condemns those launches, which show that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to develop and improve its ballistic missile capabilities in open defiance of Security Council resolutions.

We recall that the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2397 (2017) in response to a single ICBM launch. At the time, the Council rightly considered that even one ICBM launch constitutes a threat to regional and international peace and security, and it had responded accordingly.

That resolution states that we would take action to place further restrictions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Regrettably, the Council was unable

to respond to any of the ICBM launches in 2022 and has instead been forced to remain silent. The Council's sanctions are also being violated by actors who are supporting the illicit programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That must stop.

Some have argued that Council action, and even Council meetings, in response to such actions will provoke the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. However, after resolution 2397 (2017) was adopted, no further ICBM launches took place for almost five years. That shows the effectiveness of the Council when it is united.

The most recent launch is part of an unprecedented pattern of dangerous behaviour witnessed over the past two years, undermining the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and global non-proliferation efforts. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has continued to develop its ballistic missiles and nuclear programme, with a record number of ballistic missile launches in 2022. That is in parallel to the adoption by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of a new doctrine setting out conditions in which that country could use nuclear weapons, including pre-emptively. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced that it would exponentially increase its nuclear weapons arsenal, including tactical weapons, and that it would also develop another ICBM system and launch its first military satellite.

The situation is serious and indefensible, and our inaction is only enabling that behaviour. The Council cannot continue to stand by while its decisions, encapsulated in several resolutions, and credibility are consistently undermined. As members of the Security Council, we have the duty and responsibility to discuss and act on threats to international peace and security. It is for these reasons that Malta supports the proposal of the United States for a presidential statement.

We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage in meaningful dialogue towards denuclearization and adhere to its obligations under Security Council resolutions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must completely, verifiably and irreversibly abandon its nuclear and ballistic missiles programme and return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. We also urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Malta remains concerned about the plight of the population living in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as acute humanitarian needs go unmet. According to the World Food Programme, an estimated 10.7 million people are undernourished and require emergency relief, yet humanitarian access remains highly constrained. In that regard, Malta calls on the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully engage with the United Nations and the international humanitarian system, as well as to enable and facilitate humanitarian assistance to reach those in greatest need across the country.

In conclusion, I reiterate that everyone at the table has a shared objective — peace and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Our division and silence only pushes that further out of reach. Now is the time to speak with one voice.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): I would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening today's urgent meeting of the Security Council. My gratitude also goes to Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

The Republic of Korea condemns, in the strongest terms, the continued ballistic missile launches of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including its intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch on 18 February and two additional ballistic missile launches on 20 February local time, which clearly constitute flagrant violations of multiple Security Council resolutions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has once again squandered its scarce resources by dangerously blowing up ballistic missiles in the sky, despite the severe and ongoing suffering of its own people, as a result of the deteriorating situation with regard to food shortages.

I need not remind the Council of the fact that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched approximately 70 ballistic missiles in 2022 alone and has continued its nuclear activities thus far, as rightly pointed out by Assistant Secretary-General Khiari and in the multiple reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency. In fact, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea held a massive military parade on 8 February and showcased a new type of ICBM, as well

as at least 11 Hwasong-17 ICBMs, which have a range of approximately 15,000 kilometres. Yesterday, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea even threatened to use the Pacific Ocean as its firing range. In that sense, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is highly likely to engage in more provocations in the near future.

It is appalling to witness how the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, a Member State of the United Nations, can completely disregard its international obligations by undermining and denouncing the Council. Just after the Council's meeting last Thursday, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea released a statement that threatened additional actions in protest against the Security Council itself. After the ICBM launch, Kim Yo-jong issued a statement to justify the country's unlawful provocation by criticizing the Council's mandate operations. There is no other Member State that blatantly mocks and menaces the functioning of the Security Council and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea does.

Against that deeply disturbing backdrop, I would like to highlight the following points.

First, it is deplorable that the Council has failed to properly respond to the repeated violations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of multiple Security Council resolutions owing to the vetoes wielded by two permanent members last May, despite the support of all of the other 13 Council members. Those vetoes were indeed self-contradictory in the sense that those two permanent members were the very same actors who voted in favour of the 10 substantive and binding Security Council resolutions on the unlawful weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from 2006 to 2017. Among them, the most recent, resolution 2397 (2017), even explicitly decided to take action to restrict the further export of petroleum to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the event of additional ICBM launches. That resolution was virtually nullified by the two permanent members.

Secondly, we must close loopholes and ensure the full implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions. Our united action is essential in leading the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to diplomacy and dialogue. Some argue that sanctions are ineffective. Of course they are ineffective, if some important

countries do not fully implement them. All of us here in the Chamber should completely fulfil our obligations, in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

Thirdly, we must strengthen our cooperation to cut off the revenue sources of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for its WMD programme. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea increasingly profits from its malicious cyberactivities and overseas information technology workers all around the world. It is estimated that, since 2017, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has stolen more than \$1.2 billion through cyberattacks and approximately \$600 million by hacking a single online game last year. That is a rather conservative estimate.

Lastly, my delegation listened carefully to what Council members had to say today. Let me be clear again. There are no excuses for the illicit nuclear and missile provocations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has recklessly developed its WMD programme for decades — I repeat, for decades — according to its plan, regardless of our military exercises or policy towards the country. Any attempt to blame so-called both sides for the current tension on the peninsula is illogical and groundless, and therefore unacceptable. Speaking on behalf of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea or attempting to justify its behaviour only contributes to emboldening Pyongyang and further building up the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear arsenal.

At the same time, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's unlawful provocations, unchecked by the Council, simply result in further solidifying our alliance and strengthening extended deterrence, as well as our defence capabilities, in cooperation with regional partners and beyond. And the repeated failures of the Council in taking action to respond to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's recurrent provocations only forces the parties directly involved, including my country, to establish other unilateral measures that some Security Council members do not want to see.

The Republic of Korea would like to reiterate that the door for dialogue remains wide open, including six-party talks, with no preconditions attached. We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to stop endangering the world and to return to diplomacy.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.