



# Security Council

Seventy-eighth year

## 9305

th meeting

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New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Nebenzia/Ms. Evstigneeva . . . . .	(Russian Federation)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania . . . . .	Mr. Hoxha
	Brazil . . . . .	Mr. De Almeida Filho
	China . . . . .	Mr. Zhang Jun
	Ecuador . . . . .	Mrs. Sánchez Izquierdo
	France . . . . .	Mr. De Rivière
	Gabon . . . . .	Ms. Koumby Missambo
	Ghana . . . . .	Ms. Oppong-Ntiri
	Japan . . . . .	Mr. Ishikane
	Malta . . . . .	Mrs. Frazier
	Mozambique . . . . .	Mr. Afonso
	Switzerland . . . . .	Mr. Hauri
	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 3.05 p.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea**

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): 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 launched what it described as a new type of intercontinental ballistic missile on 13 April. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea said that it test-fired the ballistic missile, which it designated as Hwasong-18, to confirm "the performance of the high-thrust solid-fuel engines for multi-stage missiles". It was the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's first launch of a long-range solid-fuel ballistic missile. Solid-propellant missiles do not need to undergo fuelling prior to launch. They can therefore be launched more quickly than liquid-propellant missiles. That also means that it may be more difficult to detect the preparations for a launch in a timely manner.

The Secretary-General strongly condemns the launch of yet another long-range ballistic missile by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Secretary-General reiterates his calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately desist from taking any further destabilizing 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.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Central Military Commission, the latter on 10 April, have warned of so-called "countermeasures" in response to military exercises in the region. Earlier today, the Marshal of the Korean People's Army issued a statement opposing today's meeting of the Security Council.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to implement its five-year military development plan unveiled during the eighth Party Congress in January 2021. That plan provided for the development of specific capabilities, many involving the Democratic People's Republic of Korea pursuing its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes, in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea claims to be hitting significant milestones on its five-year plan, including since our previous briefing, on 20 March (see S/PV.9292).

For example, the plan included developing a new solid-propellant intercontinental-range ballistic missile. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea reportedly achieved that with the launch on 13 April. That plan also provided for the development of multiple warheads, tactical nuclear weapons, a military reconnaissance satellite, new unmanned aerial systems and a hypersonic gliding flight warhead.

In line with its five-year plan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea greatly increased its missile launch activities in 2022 and 2023, including more than 80 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 countries in the immediate region. The systems it tested on 13 April, 16 March and 18 February, as well as on two occasions last year, are capable of reaching most points on Earth.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea did not issue airspace or maritime safety notifications for any of those launches. Despite the Democratic People's Republic of Korea claiming otherwise, unannounced launches represent a serious risk to international civil aviation and maritime traffic.

Key peace and security issues, such as that of the Korean peninsula, must be an area for cooperation. We welcome the Security Council's commitment, as

expressed in resolution 2397 (2017), 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.

The lack of unity and action in the Security Council does little to slow the negative trajectory on the Korean peninsula. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is unconstrained, and other parties are compelled to focus on military deterrence. As the Council considers its options, there are several practical steps that could reduce tensions, reverse the dangerous dynamic and create space to explore diplomatic avenues.

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

Secondly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should reopen communication channels, including military-to-military channels. It has been unresponsive to daily routine calls via inter-Korean communication lines since 7 April. It will be critical to avoid an unintended escalation.

Thirdly, reducing confrontational rhetoric will help lower political tensions and create a space for exploring diplomatic avenues.

Separately, I would like to highlight once more our concerns with regard to 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 the medical and other basic needs of vulnerable populations. We welcomed the return on 27 March of diplomats from one Member State to Pyongyang. We reiterate our call to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to allow international staff, including the Resident Coordinator, to enter the country unimpeded, and to permit the entry of humanitarian supplies in order to ensure a timely and effective response.

Let me conclude by stressing once again that the unity of the Security Council on the question of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is essential to easing tensions and overcoming the diplomatic impasse. The primary responsibility for international peace and

security rests with the Council, and the Secretariat is its partner in this effort. We remain in close contact with all the key parties, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and are ready to seize opportunities whenever the conditions are right to make a difference. The Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, is on a visit to North-East Asia as we speak. The Secretary-General's good offices and our convening power are always available.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): 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): Let me start by thanking Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

Here we are once again, finding ourselves in an emergency special meeting of the Security Council after yet another intercontinental ballistic-missile (ICBM) launch by Pyongyang. If it is starting to feel as if we are here nearly every month, it is because we are. Almost a month ago to the day (see S/PV.9287), we met after the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched its second ICBM since the beginning of 2023. And today we are meeting after its third such launch this year, which comes on top of 14 other ballistic-missile launches. The United States condemns in the strongest possible terms the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's intercontinental ballistic-missile launch on 13 April. Once again, Pyongyang launched a missile without warning, endangering civilians, civil aviation and maritime traffic. Last week, its State media claimed that its new solid-fuel ICBM "promotes the effectiveness of its nuclear counter-attack posture" and makes its offensive military strategy more attainable. That aggressive rhetoric demonstrates the continued dedication of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to advancing its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic-missile programmes.

In years past, there was no question as to whether the Council should or would respond to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's violation of multiple Security Council resolutions. There was a time when all the members of the Council came together to make it clear that there is zero justification for proliferators and their unlawful WMD and ballistic-missile programmes. The United States believes that the Council has a

responsibility to once again send that kind of strong, united message. And we believe that the Council must do everything in its power to prevent the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from carrying out future unlawful ballistic-missile launches or a seventh nuclear test. But we remain deeply frustrated, as I know many other Member States are, by the continued inaction that is quite simply unacceptable and that undermines the credibility of the Council and the entire international non-proliferation regime.

The two Council members responsible for the inaction also continue to defend the behaviour of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Time and time again, they draw false equivalencies between the unlawful ballistic-missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and lawful, defensive and pre-announced United States-Republic of Korea joint military exercises. But a simple review of the facts disproves that narrative. After all, by the time the United States and the Republic of Korea resumed large-scale exercises, in August 2022, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had already launched 31 ballistic missiles, including six ICBM launches. And its efforts to reconstitute its nuclear test site were well under way. Let me be clear. Our lawful efforts to defend against the repeated escalatory actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea do not in any way justify its unlawful behaviour.

Furthermore, United Nations Command has established United States-Republic of Korea military-exercise notification protocols to mitigate the risk of misinterpretation or miscalculation. That approach stands in stark contrast to the reckless, unannounced and unlawful ballistic-missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which pose a threat to international peace and security. Every member of the Council reaffirmed this threat in the unanimous adoption of resolution 2680 (2023) in March, renewing the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006). And long-range ballistic-missile tests such as that conducted last week threaten not only the region, but the entire world. This is not a bilateral issue. It is a threat to every single one of us.

Today I also want to shine a spotlight on some of the revenue-generating activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — activities that are conducted globally to fund its unlawful weapons programme. For example, we know that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducts malicious cyberheists and other

illicit financial activities. According to the 1718 Panel of Experts reports, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea attempted to steal as much as \$2 billion between 2015 and 2019 through cybermeans. And, according to private-industry estimates, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stole as much as \$1.7 billion in cryptocurrency in 2022 alone. The Panel has cited dozens of investigations into instances of actors in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea targeting financial institutions and cryptocurrency exchanges in South-East Asia, Africa and South America. Such activities directly contribute to the country's unlawful WMD and ballistic-missile programmes, including the 13 April launch. Instead of using the money to feed its people, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is using it to fuel instability. It continues to choose ammunition over nutrition.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has made its intentions clear. It is now time for the Security Council to do the same. The United States will continue to seek a dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and engage in good-faith negotiations with all Council members. But if we fail to act, I fear we will be in the same meeting in the not-too distant future, no closer to our shared goal of denuclearization. Let us do everything in our power to change course, and let us come together once again on this urgent matter of international peace and security.

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

We have warned of this many times before, so we are not surprised today. We warned that if we did nothing, if we stayed silent and were muted while the Democratic People's Republic of Korea broke international law and threatened its neighbours with impunity, the regime would come to conclude that the Council was divided and weak, made toothless and irrelevant, and therefore that there was no reason to stop. And it is clear for all to see that it is not stopping. It continues to defy the international community, ignoring Security Council resolutions and pushing ahead with its dangerous escalatory policies.

A few days ago, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's regime did once again what it has been doing regularly over the past 15 months. For the fifteenth time this year alone, it has tested new types of weapons that are more modern, more mobile and difficult to detect, bringing its provocations and threats to a higher level.



We strongly deplore such policies and reckless actions. We reiterate our call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to stop. But that is not enough — in fact, it is even counterproductive, since through its inactivity, the Security Council has in a way conveyed to the warmongers in North Korea that for them, actions have no consequences. We cannot and must not be reduced to mere spectators.

If the Security Council has not ceased dealing with peace and security, the defiant transgressions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's regime require a strong and united response. If the Council gives any meaning to the word prevention, it must act now, before it is too late, in order to prevent the worst. If it has not decided to make North Korea's behaviour a template for dangerous transgressions by others, it ought to immediately impress upon the Pyongyang regime that its provocations have lasted far too long. We need to assure all neighbouring countries, including the peoples of Japan and the Republic of Korea, that the Council takes the threat posed by the regime seriously and is determined and committed to responding promptly and appropriately. It must not do so with silence, through powerlessness, by tolerating the inexcusable or ignoring the unjustifiable, but by using its toolbox.

More weapons will not make the country any better or more developed — on the contrary, by pouring an insane amount of its meagre resources, including those illegally acquired, into its weapons of mass destruction programme, the regime is inflicting even more pain on a starving population imprisoned in a paranoid, self-centred and non-responsive system with a catastrophic record of violations of human rights that has led to a huge and persistent humanitarian crisis. Unfortunately that has been the regime's choice, and it bears all the responsibility.

If instead it cooperated with the world, developing its economy and trade, opening up to investments and stopping its policies of provocation, North Korea would get out of its self-imposed isolation and join the international community not in fear, but with hope. It does not need to invent anything; it just needs to look around at what others have done. We will continue to advocate for and support genuine efforts to use collective preventive diplomacy to address the threat posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and ensure that the regime fully, transparently, comprehensively and irreversibly puts an end to its weapons of mass destruction, ballistic and nuclear programmes.

**Dame Barbara Woodward** (United Kingdom): I would like to start by thanking Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

The United Kingdom condemns the launch on 13 April of what the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has called an intercontinental ballistic missile. This first launch of a solid-fuel missile represents a significant increase in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's ballistic-missile capabilities. Such missiles could potentially reach almost every point on Earth. While it chose to limit the flight distance this time, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's reckless actions nonetheless created concern and alarm among the people of Japan, who are directly threatened by them. We can expect that threat to intensify as long as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is able to continue to develop weapons of mass destruction capabilities.

These violations of Council resolutions are too serious to ignore. We should set aside our differences and send a united message that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's behaviour is unacceptable. The United Kingdom is ready to work with all Council members to send that clear message, as well as to build a framework for renewed dialogue and to facilitate aid. We once again call on all Member States to implement the existing resolutions, which were unanimously agreed by the Council in full. We also call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take up the repeated offers from the United States and the Republic of Korea aimed at holding a dialogue. As we have said repeatedly and consistently, diplomacy is the only route towards sustained peace on the peninsula.

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

Three initial steps have been suggested — resuming a dialogue, reopening communication lines and reducing confrontational rhetoric. It is my greatest regret, as it should be for all of us here, that we have come to this Chamber again to discuss North Korea. Since the start of the year, the Security Council has convened every month to discuss North Korea's unlawful development of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. Is that because the agenda item entitled “Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea” is a monthly scheduled meeting? No. Is it because it is one of the Council's favourite agenda items? Of course not. It is only because North Korea has continued to violate the

resolutions of the Council, posing a threat to the region and beyond. That is what we do not want to see. It is what the Council has repeatedly demanded be stopped and it is what we should take action on now.

Japan condemns, in the strongest possible terms, North Korea's unlawful and destabilizing acts, including the recent ballistic missile launch on 13 April, which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea claimed to be a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and once again urges all Council members to show our collective commitment to standing firmly against those provocations. Let us look clearly at the reality we have been facing throughout the Council's long silence and inaction.

First, North Korea has conducted repeated missile launches. It has steadily developed diversified ranges, types and modalities of missiles and other weapons systems. That includes a self-proclaimed underwater nuclear attack drone, which is said to generate a radioactive-contaminated tsunami.

Secondly, North Korea has publicly articulated its intention to mass-produce nuclear warheads.

Thirdly, North Korea has now reportedly tested a new type of solid-fuel ICBM, one of the development targets in its five-year military plan.

Fourthly, North Korea has been publicly criticizing, intimidating and trying to silence the Secretary-General — not to mention the Security Council — for doing his job on the issue. The threat is ongoing and growing.

I wish to remind fellow colleagues that North Korea announced its five-year military plan in January 2021. What we are witnessing now is the steady implementation of its long-pursued nuclear and missile programmes, including that plan. This is a clear demonstration that the idea that there exists a negative action-reaction cycle — and therefore the Council should refrain from taking action to avoid provoking North Korea — is a fallacy. The Council's silence has not slowed North Korea at all; in fact, the country has accelerated and diversified its activities.

The North Koreans are taking full advantage of the Council's inaction. They are repeatedly and flagrantly violating multiple unanimously adopted Security Council resolutions. The Council's refusal to enforce its own resolutions has undermined its credibility. Not only North Korea but the entire world is watching to

see whether we in this Chamber can fulfil the heavy responsibility that has been entrusted on us by all States Members of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security. In this regard, Japan once again calls on all Member States to fully implement relevant resolutions and urges North Korea to immediately and fully comply with all relevant resolutions, engage in diplomacy and accept the repeated offers of dialogue.

Now is the time for the Security Council to fulfil its duty by sending a strong and unified message. The proposed presidential statement is a step forward, even as we stand ready to adopt more robust actions. Let us finally end the negative action-inaction cycle between North Korea and the Security Council.

**Mrs. Frazier** (Malta): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for another important briefing.

We are meeting today following yet another launch of an intercontinental-ballistic missile (ICBM) — once again in violation of multiple resolutions adopted by the Security Council. This missile launch was confirmed to be a new solid-fuel ballistic missile. This is deeply concerning. It confirms, once again, that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to develop and improve its ballistic-missile capabilities in the face of the Council.

Malta recalls that resolution 2397 (2017) was adopted unanimously by the Council in response to an ICBM launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (see S/PV.8151). It was decided that we would take action to place further restrictions on the Democratic People's Republic if faced with even a single further launch. Instead, in the face of 11 ICBM launches since the start of 2022, the Security Council stands frozen and unable to respond to these serious threats to regional and international peace and security.

This raises the question: how many times does the Democratic People's Republic of Korea need to violate Security Council resolutions before the Council can pronounce itself?

Civilians across the region are living in fear of these launches. This is exemplified by the most recent launch triggering a safety alert for civilians to seek shelter. A number of previous ballistic-missile launches have flown over Japanese territory or landed in Japan's exclusive economic zone. Civilian air and maritime traffic are seriously endangered by these launches. No warnings are issued beforehand. This cannot be

allowed to become part of our daily life or the daily life of the people — men, women and children — living in the region.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's deeply concerning and reckless behaviour poses a significant threat to international peace and security and undermines global non-proliferation efforts. The Democratic People's Republic is acting in flagrant disregard of its own international obligations and with complete indifference towards the concerns voiced by many Member States. The range of Democratic People's Republic of Korea's intercontinental missiles makes them capable of reaching almost every part of the world. We also continue to be concerned about the possibility of a seventh nuclear-weapon test.

The launches are coupled with the announcement of a new doctrine setting out conditions in which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea could use nuclear weapons, including pre-emptively. The Democratic People's Republic announced intentions to exponentially increase its nuclear-weapon arsenal, including with tactical weapons, to launch its first military satellite and to develop another ICBM system. We have now seen the latter of these intentions come to fruition.

Again, we ask, what will it take for the Council to act? We cannot continue to stand by while our decisions, as defined in a number of our own resolutions — and our credibility — are consistently and increasingly undermined.

Malta supports the rigorous implementation of the sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as part of our collective duty and responsibility to respond. The Security Council must uphold its own decisions and responsibilities and act now. This is why Malta supports the presidential statement proposed by the United States.

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

Malta continues to be seriously concerned about the humanitarian situation faced by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's population. International humanitarian organizations and the international staff of the United Nations have remained unable to gain access to and fully assess the medical, humanitarian and food-insecurity situation in the country since 2019. However, what we do know is that in 2019 some 40 per cent of North Koreans were in urgent need of humanitarian aid — a number that can only be higher today. The leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to ignore these serious humanitarian needs and prevent humanitarian access. Instead, it wastes its resources on costly illegal ballistic-missile launches and weapons programmes. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must restore access to United Nations and other humanitarian actors so that its population can receive the aid it requires.

While we often hear different positions on this file, each of us on the Council ultimately shares the objective of peace and denuclearization on the Korean peninsula. We must act together to avoid any further delay.

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

Warning sirens sounded again on the island of Hokkaido after a long-range ballistic missile was fired on 13 April. The threat posed by North Korea to its neighbours is real, and for more than a year, in the face of the increasing number of launches, we have remained disunited and silent. France strongly condemns this new launch, and I say this with gravity: the Security Council cannot resolve to do nothing.

The launch of this new solid-fuel-propelled missile demonstrates the continued progress of the North Korean programme. A ballistic missile of this type is faster to launch, easier to deploy and harder to locate. This is of particular concern in the light of the escalation in recent weeks. As Pyongyang prepares for, in its words, "real war" and threatens to turn the Pacific into a "firing range," North Korea has declared itself an "irreversible" nuclear Power.

Let me say it once again: France will not resign itself to North Korea becoming a nuclear-weapon State. This is a position that has been unanimously and consistently reiterated by the Security Council. To do nothing, or to be complacent with North Korea, is to trivialize nuclear proliferation. It means accepting the fact that, tomorrow, proliferation crises will multiply

elsewhere in the world. Finally, it means accepting a direct challenge to the authority of the decisions of the Security Council. In order to stop the escalation, all international sanctions adopted unanimously must be fully applied, and all forms of circumvention opposed, particularly in the cyberdomain.

In the face of these provocations, the priority is to resume dialogue, without preconditions. Proposals to this effect have been made — it is up to the North Korean authorities to take them up, and to the States of the region to encourage them. Our objective is unchanged: the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of North Korea. This Council must be exemplary. It must ensure respect for its own decisions. We need a united and resolute response, and quickly, from the international community. France will spare no effort to achieve this.

**Ms. Opong-Ntiri** (Ghana): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his briefing to the Council and welcome the participation of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea.

Last Thursday's test of a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), the first by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, is yet another disturbing confirmation of the dramatic acceleration of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's ballistic missiles programme, demonstrating the regime's resolve to have complementarity and operational readiness for its nuclear weapon delivery systems at strategic and tactical levels.

We are gravely concerned by this unacceptable situation and firmly deplore the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's actions. We note that the Panel of Experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), in its final report, issued in February, indicated the danger when it stated that

“the [previously identified major trends in the ballistic missile programme] have been confirmed and developed, including the improvement of the strategic forces' command and control, the optimization of operational readiness of both solid and liquid-propelled missile systems with increased diversity, mobility and resilience, and the continuous improvement in the efficiency of ICBM-specific liquid and solid propellant engines”. (S/2023/171, para. 23)

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's intransigence in flouting the Council's multiple resolutions and breaching its international law obligations, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), jeopardizes the security of the region and that of the international community. Therefore, it is important that the Council find a common voice to indicate that such actions cannot be countenanced.

The continuation of Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons programme and its missile delivery systems means that the Council should reconsider its approaches to dealing with the concern through an honest discussion of how we should proceed with further actions. While doing so, we must recommit to our common objectives to achieve concrete progress in the furtherance of peace and security on the Korean peninsula.

We note the different interests that exist in relation to how the situation on the Korean peninsula should be resolved but also note that there is a common concern to ensure that we do not have a nuclearized peninsula. We therefore urge a principled and pragmatic approach based on diplomacy, dialogue and trust-building to incrementally foster conditions that allow for constructive engagement to resolve the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's weapons programme.

In conclusion, we urge all parties to undertake measures to deescalate tensions on the Korean peninsula. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from further ballistic missile launches and comply with the Security Council's existing demands. It is imperative for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cooperate with the international community towards the complete and irreversible elimination of its weapons of mass destruction capabilities, including its uranium enrichment and plutonium processing capabilities, in compliance with its NPT obligations as well as International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

Finally, we hope that, through the actions of the region and other international stakeholders, the efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea can be redirected towards economic development and the welfare of its people.

**Mr. Zhang Jun** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.



Currently, tensions persist on the Korean peninsula, with confrontations escalating, which China finds deeply concerning. I heard some fellow members who spoke before me condemning other countries in harsh terms, as if the peninsula's situation, coming to today's point, had everything to do with others and nothing to do with themselves. As an old Chinese saying goes, if you sow melon seeds, that is what you get — melons, not beans.

It is not enough to merely look at how a matter is presenting itself at this moment. It is more important to see how it got to this point and recognize its underlying drivers. The peninsula issue is a legacy of the cold war that has cast a decades-long shadow. It is, in essence, a security issue. Since the armistice on the Korean peninsula, a peace mechanism has yet to materialize, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been faced with tremendous security threats and survival stressors. For decades, its legitimate concerns have been denied the attention and response they deserve. Recently, the United States has been conducting frequent military exercises on the periphery of the peninsula, deploying strategic weapons such as nuclear-powered aircraft carriers and B-52 bombers, which has greatly heightened the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's sense of insecurity. This is the main trigger for the current tensions on the peninsula.

Facing the new round of tensions spiralling on the Korean peninsula, China calls on all parties concerned to remain calm and exercise restraint, address the root causes, stay the course towards a political solution, which is our overarching goal, and work together to achieve denuclearization and maintain peace and stability on the peninsula. In this regard, I wish to underscore three points.

First, a show of goodwill and good faith to each other is imperative. The peninsula issue has reached an inflection point several times in the past. In 1994, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States signed an agreed framework on the nuclear issue. In 2005, the six-party talks issued the 19 September joint statement. In 2018 and 2019, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea took unprecedented denuclearization steps. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea and United States leaders met and reached important consensus on improving bilateral relations, establishing a peace mechanism on the peninsula and denuclearizing the peninsula. However, because of the flip flop in the United States policy, its failure to respond in line with

the principle of action-for-action and its reversion to the old practice of sanctions and pressurization, the opportunities to resolve the Korean peninsula issue were missed time and again. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea became even more distrustful of the United States, and dialogue became completely deadlocked. The parties should reflect deeply on the lessons from the past and come to realize that a show of goodwill is vital to building mutual trust and creating the conditions necessary for peace talks. The United States, in particular, should look squarely at the crux of the matter, adopt a responsible attitude and take meaningful, practical and tangible actions.

Secondly, we need to return to the right path — that is, to relaunch dialogue. The security of all countries is indivisible, and the world needs common security. No country should pursue absolute security at the expense of the security of other countries. This has important implications for resolving the peninsula issue. All the parties concerned should put themselves in each other's shoes, acknowledge each other's legitimate concerns, reduce provocations, confrontations and pressurization, and create enabling conditions whereby meaningful dialogue can resume. China is a long-standing advocate of the dual-track approach and the principle of moving forward in phases with synchronized steps. We stress that denuclearizing the Korean peninsula and establishing a peace mechanism on the peninsula are both indispensable. These proposals played an important role in turning around the situation on the peninsula in the past and will continue to guide any effort to settle the issue once and for all. All parties concerned should continue to work in this direction.

Thirdly, we need to gauge and modulate the right approach, so the Security Council can properly play its role. Any action taken by the Council should be geared first and foremost towards easing the situation on the peninsula and promoting its long-term stability and security. The Council should not discard its even-handed approach, much less become an instrument for imposing sanctions and pressure to the exclusion of other options or in the service of some countries' geopolitical strategies. As to how the Council should pronounce itself, the crux here is to look at what it can achieve. If the purpose of the outcome or products is merely to launch a one-sided condemnation of one party, that will only intensify the antagonism and even lead to an end result that none of the parties wish to see. I would also like to emphasize that the Security Council

resolutions cover not just sanctions but also contain text on resuming dialogue and resolving the issue politically, which should not be selectively ignored. The draft resolution on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea proposed to the Council by Russia and China can inject impetus into the political settlement of the issue on the Korean peninsula. In the face of the current complex situation, all parties should give further positive consideration to our proposed draft resolution.

In the earlier statement by the representative of the United States, reference was made to United Nations command. As is known to all, the United Nations command was a product of the cold war and has long been out of date. China never acknowledged the so-called United Nations command.

**Mr. Hauri** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): We thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

The Council is meeting because of a new intercontinental ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Switzerland condemns that launch of a new model, which presumably has solid-fuel propulsion. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is thus developing increasingly dangerous and multiple nuclear delivery systems, which, together with its nuclear programme, pose a threat to the entire international community. Switzerland is concerned about the increasing pace of missile tests, which exacerbate tensions and worsen the security situation. It recalls the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. We must strengthen our efforts for non-proliferation, disarmament and the maintenance of the nuclear taboo. Month after month, our discussions become more similar, as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear programme continues to evolve. However, these meetings and our discussions remain crucial, for the Council cannot ignore its duty and responsibilities. I want to highlight three challenges.

First, these launches are in violation of legally binding Security Council resolutions and thus international law. It is therefore our collective duty to condemn the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's ballistic missile tests. Switzerland reiterates that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is obliged to implement its obligations under the Council's resolutions and to take concrete steps to abandon its nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles and related programmes

in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. 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 resolutions apply primarily to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, they apply to all States, which are required to effectively implement the Security Council sanctions.

Secondly, Switzerland underlines the importance of the Council's efforts to ensure that humanitarian assistance remains possible and is not negatively affected by sanctions. The unity of the Council that allowed for the adoption of resolution 2664 (2022) is proof of our common goal in that regard. The severe restrictions put in place by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in connection with the pandemic are severely hampering international humanitarian assistance. We hope they will be lifted, so that humanitarian assistance can resume quickly. The needs of the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must not be forgotten, and their human rights must be respected. The development of nuclear and military programmes remains possible only at the cost of serious human rights violations and a precarious humanitarian situation.

Thirdly, the Council and the United Nations as a whole have an important role to play in encouraging dialogue, de-escalation and the search for diplomatic solutions. There is a willingness to conduct and support a dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We welcome the Secretary-General's call for good offices and encourage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage constructively in dialogue with the Council and the United Nations system.

In order to find a political solution, the Council must break its silence. The call for dialogue should be based on a united position. We encourage all members in the search for consensus in view of a Council product. Switzerland will support all efforts to achieve this unity.

**Mr. De Almeida Filho** (Brazil): At the outset, allow me to thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his nuanced and informative briefing. I welcome the delegation of the Republic of Korea to this meeting.

Brazil once again condemns, in the strongest terms, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch of 13 April. The launch violated relevant Security Council

resolutions, put at risk maritime and air safety and endangered neighbouring populations, causing an evacuation order to be issued in Hokkaido, Japan.

Yet beyond these risks, which have unfortunately become commonplace in this file, Thursday's launch represents a dangerous development in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's missile programme and in their nuclear capabilities. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea advanced from a liquid-fuelled ICBM to a solid-fuelled ICBM in a mere six years. Six years is meaningful. That is the time since our last round of Security Council sanctions, the toughest and broadest round of sanctions yet, which at the time made the Democratic People's Republic of Korea perhaps the most sanctioned country in the world.

The 13 April launch illustrates the fact that sanctions alone have not been and cannot be the solution to this file. A possible tenth round of sanctions, no matter how tough, will not by itself bring the nuclear and missile programmes to a halt. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has shown time and again that they are willing and able to continue to operate under the toughest sanctions ever imposed in order to continue to pursue what they see, rightly or wrongly, as an existential issue.

When we say the Council must do more, we do not mean the Council must do more of the same. More of the same has not worked. It is clear to us that a comprehensive approach is necessary in this file. We reiterate our position that sanctions can be legitimate and effective when they are multilaterally agreed, strategically targeted and designed to have minimal impact on the civilian population. Even then, they must be part of a broad package that includes a political process that can bring down tensions and advance towards a comprehensive solution to the file.

In our most recent meeting on the issue (see S/PV.9287), Brazil and others laid out a series of practical ideas for facilitating engagement with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We suggested the Council make better use of its Chapter VI tools to promote engagement, establish processes and recommend measures of adjustment, working closely with the United Nations Secretariat. We have continued to explore a bigger role for the United Nations in facilitating contacts with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and we are encouraged by some of the reactions we have received. We will continue to

play a constructive role in identifying how we can help us to establish a process that can bring down tensions and interrupt the current cycle of actions and reactions. Engagement, not isolation, remains the best path towards achieving our shared goal of a Korean peninsula that is stable, peaceful and free of nuclear weapons.

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

Last Thursday, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a new ballistic missile over the Korean peninsula, rekindling tensions between the parties. Once again, my country condemns that missile launch and calls for restraint. The climate of tension resulting from an increase in the number of launches may well be irreparable. The Security Council must be able to find a solution to that situation.

My country reiterates its call for negotiations, which is the only credible way out. Everything must be done to encourage the parties to cooperate within the context of an earnest, unconditional dialogue aimed at finding a lasting solution through existing mechanisms.

We call on the parties to show the same level of commitment that led to the 2017 agreement in order to reverse the current trend, which is marked by an escalation in military force. My country does not believe in missile diplomacy and will never accept it. The Council must stand together against any risk of normalizing nuclear threats. We must urgently find viable and lasting consensus-based solutions aimed at de-escalation and the calming of tensions on the Korean peninsula. The people of that region have the right to security, and the Council cannot ignore their legitimate aspirations.

**Mr. Afonso** (Mozambique): I would like to start by conveying our thanks to Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his insightful briefing. I acknowledge the presence of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea at today's meeting.

Mozambique wishes to express its deep concern about yet another launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That is a sad step in the escalation of tensions and the deterioration of the situation on the Korean peninsula. The launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile

constitutes a factor that poses a serious threat to peace and security, not only on the Korean peninsula but also in the world at large.

Peace is a global good and it affects the entire humankind. We in Mozambique define ourselves as a peace-loving country and a staunch defender of harmonious coexistence among peoples and States. In that regard, we are deeply concerned about the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their possible use anywhere on the planet. In that connection, we reiterate our call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from contributing to the escalation of tensions and to comply with all Security Council resolutions on the matter, including resolution 2270 (2016).

We have been saying time and again, and it is written, that the maintenance of peace and security in the world is the main reason behind the creation of the United Nations. Preserving world peace, harmony and stability is therefore the total responsibility of all States. For that reason, we reiterate our position to the effect that Mozambique cannot accept acts that, by their nature, pose serious threats to peace and security anywhere in the world.

The Council needs to address the challenging situation in a collective and united manner. We believe in committed efforts to save future generations from weapons of mass destruction for the world to be a safer place. We encourage the promotion of permanent dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea so as to alleviate tensions and reduce the nuclear arms race, thereby contributing to the prevention of a nuclear disaster.

Mozambique defends the fact that new technologies must be used for improving the quality of life of human beings and not for aggravating humanitarian crises.

Let me conclude by reiterating Mozambique's commitment to all efforts, measures and initiatives that are conducive to promoting global peace and security in the world, particularly on the Korean peninsula.

**Mrs. Sánchez Izquierdo** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his briefing. I welcome the presence of the representative of the Republic of Korea at today's meeting.

Ecuador reiterates its firm condemnation of the most recent launch of a new type of intercontinental ballistic missile by the Democratic People's Republic of

Korea on 13 April. We express our solidarity with South Korea and Japan, whose populations are subjected to the threat posed by the tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

It is not an isolated event and, once again, it flouts the provisions of the Security Council. In that context, I reiterate that with resolution 2397 (2017), which was unanimously adopted, the Council expressed its determination to take significant new measures in response to any launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Today the Council has the responsibility to implement its own decisions. This organ, which believes that the launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile is a threat to regional and international peace and security and requires an immediate response, also has the responsibility to use all the tools at its disposal to encourage compliance by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with its provisions.

Moreover, Ecuador supports efforts aimed at reaching a diplomatic and political solution that would allow for the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We call for greater cooperation and dialogue, based on good faith and in compliance with international law, in order to reduce tensions in the region.

In conclusion, my delegation reiterates its call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully comply with its obligations, in accordance with international law and Security Council resolutions, and put an end to its launches, which undermine the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

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

First and foremost, the United Arab Emirates condemns the launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 13 April. That is the seventeenth ballistic missile launch in 2023 alone. The State media of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has reported that it is the first test of a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile. That weapon, which can be fired more quickly than missiles using liquid propellants, is a clear and dangerous escalation by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and threatens the region and the world.



The Security Council must address the behaviour of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. There are no signs of de-escalation from Pyongyang. The actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have only heightened tensions on the Korean peninsula and in the wider region. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is continuing to blatantly violate Security Council resolutions and endanger lives, again and again. The Council should unite in condemning the illicit activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We must also strengthen compliance with the sanctions regime pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), which remains critical in slowing the development of the nuclear and ballistic capabilities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We urge all Member States to uphold the sanctions regime and to combat the continued efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to evade sanctions.

The United Arab Emirates believes that the best way forward is for Pyongyang to return to the negotiating table and choose diplomacy and dialogue over provocation and escalation. We also call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from conducting further illegal tests, return to compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, abandon its nuclear weapons and related missile programmes, implement the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency and fulfil its denuclearization obligations.

We also remain deeply troubled by the humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In 2022, the United Nations estimated that more than 5 million people in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea required humanitarian assistance. Prior to that year, aid groups' life-saving work included the provision of clean water and medicines to children, agricultural support to address chronic food production deficits and specialized nutritional programmes for the malnourished. Those programmes have all but halted, while people in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remain in need of critical humanitarian assistance. We once again call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to allow the United Nations and humanitarian agencies to return to the country and restart their work for the benefit of the people of that country.

The continued provocations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are an unambiguous threat to international peace and security. The Security Council must demonstrate clear resolve on that critical issue, and we must find a way to move forward through dialogue.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

We thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his briefing.

Since the beginning of this year, the Security Council has convened five times on the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in various formats and upon the request of some States. As a responsible Council President, Russia accommodated the request of some delegations for another meeting on the matter. However, in our national capacity, we strongly oppose the trend to mainstream such Council meetings for the purpose of propaganda and exerting pressure.

Some Council members say their desire to discuss the situation is motivated by serious concerns about recent developments on the Korean peninsula. Indeed, the situation is very tense. However, some of the countries that request such discussions, first and foremost the United States, are direct participants in the most recent escalation. We have not heard anything new today. Once again, we are offered a one-sided version of events, in which the guilty parties have been selected in advance and the expected response to the situation must be the same as that of Washington.

Russia's position on the matter is well known. We oppose any military activity that might jeopardize the security of the Korean peninsula and the States of North-East Asia. We have repeatedly stated that the Security Council should consider the situation on the Korean peninsula in a comprehensive manner. We can deliver effectively on our responsibility to respond to threats to peace and security only when we see and understand the full picture of developments in a particular region.

The representatives of some States who spoke at length today about the importance of upholding Security Council resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea always forget that those resolutions also envisage a movement towards a political-diplomatic solution, which does not imply declarative statements, but rather specific, practical steps that should demonstrate genuine commitment to resuming dialogue and mutually acceptable ways to resolve the situation. It is our firm conviction that all discussions in the Security Council must be results-oriented.

However, in practice, the picture is quite different — threatening military exercises that simulate strikes against the Democratic People's Republic of

Korea, further illegitimate unilateral sanctions, with no regard for the humanitarian situation in North Korea, and politicized statements in the Security Council Chamber. We repeatedly underscore that the situation in the region is a vicious circle. We believe that the sharp increase in military activity in North-East Asia has been caused by the irresponsible goals of Washington and its allies to enhance sanctions-based and forceful pressure on Pyongyang as part of the so-called extended deterrence strategy.

That raises the question about the goals that Washington and its allies pursue. Coupled with the promotion by the United States of its unilateral security doctrine in the Asia-Pacific region and its desire to create more divisions in the region, the accelerated militarization of North-East Asia is assuming a clearly destructive character. Particularly telling was the establishment of the AUKUS partnership — among Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States — whose plans raise serious concerns, including in the context of compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

In conclusion, we would like to stress that repeating the same positions in the Security Council month after month, which is not then followed by concrete results, can undermine the Council's authority. Together with China, we have repeatedly proposed concrete initiatives aimed at finding mutually acceptable solutions and resolving the situation on the Korean peninsula, while taking into account the interests of all sides. Our proposals remain on the table, and we stand ready for a substantive discussion. We are convinced that the majority of Council members are also interested in jointly developing forward-looking solutions. We call on the few countries blocking that process to reconsider their approach and start working to that end. However, that would require a fundamental change in their approach, on which, regrettably, we pin but little hope.

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 begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for convening today's important 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 possible terms, the repeated ballistic missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including its intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) launch on 13 April, local time, which blatantly violates multiple Security Council resolutions. Pyongyang's State media announced that the leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was present to observe and that the launch constituted the first-ever test-fire of a new type of ICBM featuring solid-fuel engines.

Since the beginning of 2022, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has launched more than 80 ballistic missiles, including 11 ICBMs. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea regime is completely obsessed with its unlawful weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) programmes despite the severe and ongoing suffering of its own people. It is simply appalling to witness how the Democratic People's Republic of Korea completely disregards international norms and egregiously mocks and menaces the functioning and authority of the Security Council, the Secretary-General and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It is also deplorable that the Security Council has remained silent since the vetoes wielded by two permanent members last May, which even leads to the international community's desensitization to the dangerous developments unfolding in North-East Asia.

Since last year, we have vividly witnessed the reckless number of tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of delivery systems of various types and purposes. Each and every launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea allows Pyongyang to advance the development of increasingly sophisticated and formidable nuclear-weapons systems. Even as we speak, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is buying enough time to further advance its unlawful nuclear and missile programmes according to its own plan, which aims to deploy its nuclear arsenal for full-fledged operation, while taking advantage of the weakened implementation of Security Council sanctions, and to paralyse the Security Council.

Against that deeply disturbing backdrop, I would like to highlight the need to 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 profits massively from its malicious cyberactivities and overseas information technology workers with forged identities and nationalities all around the world, which

have a seriously destabilizing effect on international peace and security. The Security Council should do more to prevent and counter that issue.

I would also like to recall that all of us here are required, in accordance with resolution 2397 (2017), to repatriate all labourers of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea earning income in their jurisdictions. However, a significant number of labourers are known to remain working overseas. That is a serious concern, considering that the revenue generated by those workers contributes to the unlawful WMD programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We urge all States Members of the United Nations to repatriate the overseas workers of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to their jurisdictions and ensure that no work authorizations are renewed or granted to them, consistent with resolution 2375 (2017).

Some argue that sanctions are ineffective in slowing down the WMD programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. However, to some degree, sanctions have been curbing illicit revenue streams to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In order to be fully effective, sanctions must be thoroughly implemented by all, including the permanent members of the Security Council.

Let me be crystal clear once again. The argument that the continued missile provocations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are mainly triggered by Republic of Korea-United States military exercises is simply not consistent with the facts. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducts dangerous tests according to its own playbook. Pyongyang clearly said that its so-called Hwasong-18 launch last week was prepared under its long-term plan. A national defence science research institute in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea carried out tests of an underwater nuclear attack drone, which has been in development since 2012, according to its official announcement.

This year sombrely marks the thirtieth anniversary of the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the first and only case of a country that abuses the NPT regime and then openly develops nuclear weapons and delivery systems. The scary picture is that, if condoned, that may not be the last case.

How the Security Council responds to the nuclear provocations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will serve as a litmus test of the credibility and viability of the Security Council, as well as its role in upholding the global non-proliferation regime. In that regard, the five nuclear-weapon States under the NPT regime, which coincide with the five permanent members of the Security Council, should shoulder extraordinary responsibility.

The dangerous pursuit by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of nuclear weapons will result only in the further solidification of our alliance and the strengthening of our extended deterrence and defence capabilities, although we remain wide open to any dialogue and diplomacy with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, without any preconditions.

The reckless pursuit by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its nuclear arsenal and totalitarian control of its own people are two sides of the same coin. In order to sustain its unique regime, the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea commit gross, widespread and systematic human rights abuses and, at the same time, prioritize its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes ahead of its population. Both are closely linked to each other and accelerate the humanitarian suffering of its people.

My delegation urges all Council members to support the revival of its public meetings on the human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with which the Council remains seized. Under the current extraordinary circumstances, we should deal effectively with the issues of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, nuclear non-proliferation and human rights alike, in a comprehensive manner.

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea takes this opportunity to once again strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respond to our show of goodwill and repeated calls for sincere dialogue, rather than take further escalatory actions.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of the United States of America has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

**Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield** (United States of America): I was not sure that I wanted to take the floor again, but I think that it is important that I correct some of the comments that were made by our Russian colleague. I would like to do that on three points.

First, with regard to the trilateral security partnership among Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America (AUKUS), we have said over and over again in the Council that the AUKUS partnership is intended to enhance peace, security and stability. Russia's assertions that our trilateral partnership presents a proliferation risk are simply false, and they know it. Under AUKUS, Australia is expected to acquire conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarines to modernize its submarine fleet. Russia and China already operate nuclear-powered submarines in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world. Australia has stated it does not and will not seek nuclear weapons and remains committed to its international non-proliferation obligations. Australia is a non-nuclear-weapon State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and will remain so, as the Australian Government has consistently made clear.

Secondly, we heard that it is only the United States condemning the actions here in the Council. If we go back, and all members can look at their statements, there was hardly a Council member who did not condemn those actions. It is being roundly condemned, except for a couple of countries. And they know who they are.

Thirdly, there were comments on sanctions. The humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is of its own making. As members just heard from the Assistant Secretary-General, Kim Jong Un could alleviate his people's suffering immediately by allowing international aid organizations to re-enter the country, and also by investing in his people's well-being instead of his unlawful weapons programme. The repressive political climate of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea allows the Government to divert such a large share of its resources to weapons development without comment from his population, and it is not the responsibility of the international system to fund a humanitarian programme that allows for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to use its own money to fund a programme for weapons of mass destruction.

**The President** (*spoke in Russian*): The representative of China has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

**Mr. Zhang Jun** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I had not intended to make a second statement. But I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to make clear our position on cooperation between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States (AUKUS).

With regard to AUKUS nuclear submarine cooperation, the facts are on the table and crystal clear. This kind of cooperation in essence entails an unprecedented transfer of tons of weapons-grade nuclear material from nuclear-weapon States to a non-nuclear-weapon State. That is a glaring example of nuclear proliferation. A non-nuclear-weapon State that accepts weapons-grade nuclear materials is stepping a foot across the nuclear threshold. AUKUS nuclear submarine cooperation constitutes a serious violation of the object and purpose of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and reveals the real face of the countries concerned in ignoring their obligations with respect to nuclear non-proliferation and the concerns of the international community on the issue.

We cannot say that such acts have nothing to do with the situation on the Korean peninsula. Such double standards will seriously undermine the efforts of the international community to uphold the NPT.

**The President:** I think I will spare Council members from making a second statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation, because I think we said all we wanted in our earlier statement made in our national capacity.

(*spoke in Russian*)

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.*