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Provisional

President: Mr. Geng Shuang (China)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil	Mr. França Danese
Ecuador	Mr. Montalvo Sosa
France	Mr. De Rivière
Gabon	Mr. Biang
Ghana	Mr. Abudu-Birresborn
Japan	Mr. Ishikane
Malta	Ms. Gatt
Mozambique	Mr. Fernandes
Russian Federation	Ms. Evstigneeva
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 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and 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: At 10.42 p.m. local time on 21 November, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a Chollima-1 rocket loaded with the Malligyong-1 reconnaissance satellite from the Sohae Satellite Launching Station. The National Aerospace Technology Administration of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced that the rocket flew normally along the pre-set flight track and that the satellite entered orbit at 10.54 p.m. It also announced that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would be launching several reconnaissance satellites in a short span of time. This follows previous failed attempts on 31 May and 24 August, also using the Chollima-1 rocket.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's launches represent a serious risk to international civil aviation and maritime traffic. While the Democratic People's Republic of Korea issued a prelaunch notification to the Japanese Coast Guard, it did not issue airspace or maritime safety notifications to the International Maritime Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization or the International Telecommunication Union. While sovereign States have the right to benefit from peaceful space activities, Security Council resolutions expressly prohibit the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from conducting any launches using ballistic missile technology.

On 21 November, the Secretary-General strongly condemned the launch of yet another military satellite using ballistic missile technology. He reiterated his call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully comply with its international obligations under all relevant Security Council resolutions and to resume dialogue without preconditions to achieve the goal of sustainable peace and the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to implement its five-year military plan, unveiled in January 2021. It should be recalled that developing a military reconnaissance satellite was part of the plan, along with various other weapons systems, including so-called tactical nuclear weapons.

On 27 September, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea adopted a constitutional amendment further enshrining its policy on nuclear forces in the Constitution. As such, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has consistently demonstrated its strong intention to continue pursuing its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes, in violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. We emphasize once again our call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from such actions.

The increase in nuclear rhetoric on the Korean peninsula is deeply concerning. The Secretary-General has consistently noted that the only way to prevent the use of nuclear weapons is to eliminate them. All States must reinforce and recommit to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime built over decades, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which has yet to enter into force.

Pending the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, it is imperative that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea maintain the highest level of safety at its nuclear facilities.

With growing tensions on the Korean peninsula, the importance of re-establishing communication channels and off-ramps is essential, particularly between military entities. Exercising maximum restraint is critical to avoiding unintended accidents or miscalculations.

We call on Security Council members to unite and explore practical measures to halt the current negative trend, making full use of the tools of dialogue, diplomacy and negotiation, while adhering to all Security Council resolutions.

On a separate note, I would like to highlight once again concerns regarding the humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United Nations is ready to assist the efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in addressing the basic needs of its vulnerable populations. We continue to closely follow the easing of Democratic People's Republic of Korea border restrictions and urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to allow the unimpeded re-entry and rotation of the international community, including the United Nations Resident Coordinators and other international United Nations staff. A collective return would have a positive impact on international support to the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): 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 briefing the Council on this grave threat to international peace and security.

Many times, the Council has urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to halt its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes. Many times, we have asked Pyongyang to reject provocation and embrace negotiation. Many times, we have opened the door to meaningful diplomacy, but time and again the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has flatly ignored these calls and indeed brazenly violated multiple Security Council resolutions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's 21 November launch of a space-launch vehicle using ballistic missile technology was not even the latest in a long line of such flagrant violations. The very next day, Pyongyang launched another ballistic missile.

In addition to those launches, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has launched three satellite launch vehicles and 29 ballistic missiles, including four intercontinental ballistic missiles in this year alone. And now a North Korean reconnaissance satellite has been confirmed in orbit. Despite what we might hear today, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is not responding to United States or allied military activity. No, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has made its motivations clear. The Democratic People's

Republic of Korea is unabashedly trying to advance its nuclear weapons delivery system by testing ballistic missile technology, in clear violation of the Council's resolutions. This reckless, unlawful behaviour threatens all of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's neighbours and all Member States. As we heard from Mr. Khiari, there was no notification of this action.

This body is charged with maintaining international peace and security. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is undermining that authority. But it is how we respond that ultimately determines our credibility. And yet there are two permanent members that have been unwilling to condemn this dangerous, escalatory launch and others like it. On the contrary, this past July, senior officials from the Russian Federation and China attended a Democratic People's Republic of Korea military parade. They celebrated alongside Kim Jong Un as he showcased his ballistic missile programme, a programme explicitly prohibited by the Council, on which they sit as permanent members. To add insult to injury, Russia is expanding its military relationship with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which, by Putin's own admission, could include helping the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to build more satellites like the one launched last week. And our information indicates that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has provided Russia with more than 1,000 containers of military equipment and munitions that will be used to support Russia's brutal war in Ukraine.

How many more times must we gather for briefings like this before Russia and China join us in demanding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea abandon its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes? What will it take for them to condemn Pyongyang's unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes and associated global procurement network? For our part, the United States continues to call for dialogue on any topic with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, without preconditions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea can choose the time and the topic. But the Democratic People's Republic of Korea needs to make that choice.

In recent weeks, we have found common ground on shared matters of global peace and security. This issue should be no different. Today we call on the Council to speak out once again to encourage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to focus less on

stocking an arsenal and more on stocking the pantries of the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who suffer from severe economic hardship and malnutrition, and to accept the United Nations' offer of support. We call on the Council to urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage in diplomacy and to exercise our responsibility to maintain international peace and security and uphold the global non-proliferation regime.

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

After two failed attempts on 21 November, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a military reconnaissance satellite. We condemn it, as it represents another act of escalation in total disregard of multiple Security Council resolutions. This was the third such attempt in six months. But these are not the only violations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which has launched almost 30 ballistic missiles, including several intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). The regime continues to invest in its military capabilities through open provocation, seeking destabilization and escalation and putting in danger the entire region. In this regard, we share the concerns of the countries in the region and remain worried about any accidents or possible miscalculations that could be caused by all these military actions and continued trends.

The propaganda and the false narratives pushed by the regime portray the launch as a full-fledged exercise of self-defence. As a matter of fact, sending such satellites into space may provide the regime with additional opportunities to develop technologies useful to its ballistic missile and nuclear programmes, including re-entry technology for nuclear warheads.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is not under any threat by its neighbours or anyone else in the world. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is only and constantly under the threat of its own regime, their escalatory and dangerous policies, their wrong choices, which are starving people, and their frightening paranoia, which has made it a pariah. The international community has shown continuously that it wants to help and has spared no effort to offer humanitarian assistance to reach the people of Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who are hostages of their own regime in a country that is more like an open-air prison.

The actions undertaken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its heightened rhetoric are a direct threat to the region and peace and security on the Korean peninsula, and an open challenge to the global non-proliferation regime. As such, they cannot remain unanswered by the Security Council. Indeed, the case of North Korea is a perfect example of preventive action, one of clear and urgent necessity to act before things get worse, before what is openly said is openly done. The regime does not hide its intentions and, amid the inaction of the Council, it feels free to carry them out, despite them being illegal, dangerous and escalatory.

So much has happened since the Security Council stopped taking the Democratic People's Republic of Korea issue seriously and became unable to maintain the common ground it had secured for years. In 2016, North Korea had not fired any intercontinental ballistic missiles. Since then, it has developed and launched three types of ICBMs and is now placing satellites in space, which it could use to target its neighbours more effectively. It is a frightening prospect, from which no one in the region or outside has anything to gain. And still the Council is surprisingly muted. The result of it is no progress whatsoever on demilitarization, more modern weapons, more satellites and a more aggressive and dangerous regime.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is also violating the sanctions regime, and we know that that cannot be done alone. We condemn all efforts to open windows of opportunities to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for military and nuclear purposes, which not only violate the sanctions regime and international norms but also increase tensions on the Korean peninsula and exacerbate threats to peace and security elsewhere, including on our continent, Europe. Such acts call for meticulous scrutiny and accountability. When resolutions are not respected, when rules are broken, when sanctions are not observed, and when actions and policies lead to threats, it is the primary duty of the Security Council to act. It has repeatedly not done so in the case of North Korea. We profoundly regret this wrong approach. Protecting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea means empowering it to continue with its nuclear programme and giving it a licence for further militarization and continued threats to its neighbours.

The majority of the members of the Council continue to call for it to act against the reckless attitude of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They are

not listened to. We may end up regretting this pervasive inactivity. If we do not want the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to believe that actions have no consequences, if we do not want to make it believe that diplomatic tools are useless, and if we do not intend to make North Korea's violations a pattern for other rogue States to follow and to allow it to make a mockery of the Security Council, we must act and respond in a prompt and proper way to the irresponsible behaviour. The Council has done so in the past, and there is even more reason to act now. And through collective and preventive diplomacy, it must ensure that the regime ends its weapons-of-mass-destruction, ballistic and nuclear programmes fully, transparently, comprehensively and irreversibly. That is the only way.

Mr. Montalvo Sosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, for his informative briefing.

Ecuador strongly condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's launch on 21 November of a military reconnaissance satellite, in yet another provocative act that flagrantly violates Security Council resolutions, undermines the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and exacerbates tensions in the region. In addition, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has conducted a record number of ballistic-missile tests this year, and the Council has been unable to respond or take concrete measures to address them.

Member States, especially the sponsors of two of the draft resolutions recently adopted in the First Committee, that is, draft resolution A/C.1/78/L.55, entitled "Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space", and draft resolution A/C.1/78/L.53, entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space", should promote the implementation of those draft resolutions, especially as they refer to the peaceful uses of outer space and the prevention of an arms race in outer space in order to ensure that it does not become an arena for military confrontation.

Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations provides that the Member States of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. My delegation therefore calls once again on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with and fulfil its obligations under the Charter and the resolutions of the Council, and urges it to refrain from further launches of military reconnaissance

satellites or ballistic missiles and to end its nuclear-weapon development programme immediately.

In conclusion, I reiterate Ecuador's commitment to contributing to dialogue in good faith and cooperation — which all the parties directly involved should engage in without delay — to achieve a diplomatic and political solution of the situation on the Korean peninsula.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Mr. Khiari for his briefing.

On 21 November, after two unsuccessful attempts in May and August, North Korea announced that it had placed a military reconnaissance satellite in orbit, making it clear that North Korea continues to act in violation of its international obligations. The spacecraft's launch employed ballistic-missile technology, in a demonstration of the worrisome progress that North Korea has made in its illegal ballistic-missile programme. It is yet another clear violation of the resolutions of the Security Council.

North Korea has stepped up its nuclear rhetoric in recent months. In September it amended its Constitution to enshrine its possession of nuclear weapons, while the authorities in Pyongyang have continued to call repeatedly for an exponential increase in the country's nuclear arsenal. Those provocations contribute to heightening regional and international tensions and constitute a direct challenge both to the integrity of the international non-proliferation regime and the Security Council's authority. The Council cannot remain silent in the face of those violations.

We deplore the fact that permanent members of the Council — nuclear-weapon States, as per the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — publicly display their support for North Korea's illegal programmes. The Council should demonstrate unity and reaffirm its obligation to implementing its resolutions. That obligation applies not just to North Korea but to all Member States. In that connection, we can only reiterate our concern about the mutual arms transfers between North Korea and the Russian Federation, which are violations of the embargo established by the Council's resolutions, in addition to providing direct support for the North Korean regime in its proliferation activities.

France once again calls on North Korea to comply with its international obligations. We urge it to opt for a path of diplomacy and to respond to the proposals for dialogue that have been made to it with a view to

engaging in discussions aimed at ensuring that it ends its weapons-of-mass-destruction and ballistic-missile programmes completely, irreversibly and verifiably.

Finally, we call on North Korea to prioritize the welfare of its people rather than devoting its scarce resources to the development of its nuclear arsenal, by reopening its borders and enabling humanitarian actors to return as soon as possible.

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): I too thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

I must begin by expressing my condemnation in the strongest terms of yet another launch by North Korea using ballistic-missile technology, in violation of multiple Security Council resolutions. It is particularly appalling that its reckless behaviour took place despite the fact that at the Council meetings in June and August on this matter (see S/PV. 9336 and S/PV.9398), most Council members, as well as the Secretary-General, continued to call on North Korea not to conduct further launches. North Korea's series of unlawful actions, including its latest launch using ballistic-missile technology, which flew directly over the Japanese archipelago, are threats to international peace and security and a serious challenge to the global non-proliferation regime. Japan joins the Secretary-General in strongly condemning North Korea for its recent launch.

Let us recall the basics of our discussion today. We are not gathered here to discuss either the right to use outer space or the right to self-defence. The very name of the agenda item makes it clear. We are here to ensure the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). The Council has unanimously adopted multiple resolutions obliging North Korea to refrain from conducting any further launches that use ballistic-missile technology, because it contributes to the country's development of delivery systems for nuclear weapons and poses a grave threat to the peace and security of the region and beyond. Let us be clear about our collective responsibility for the non-proliferation of WMDs and not spiral into the ambiguities of political rhetoric. We should not be deceived by any attempt to justify North Korea's ambition to pursue unlawful WMD programmes. The Council should be united on non-proliferation matters. I urge all Council members to reaffirm their commitment to the global non-proliferation regime, which we must all value and uphold.

North Korea has continued to ignore and deny its international obligations by pursuing its military ambitions according to its five-year plan. Its actions are disrespectful to the Council and to the Charter of the United Nations. It is high time for responsible Council members to restore the unity they displayed in 2017 and live up to their commitment to standing firmly against proliferation. Otherwise, we are only sending a wrong message — and not just to Pyongyang, but the entire world, including potential proliferators.

In the light of not only widening division within the international community over approaches to nuclear disarmament, but also the aggravating security environment, the international community must express grave concern over such an irresponsible act, committed by North Korea, and take decisive action to address it.

Japan once again calls on all Member States to fully implement the relevant resolutions. In that regard, arms transfers from North Korea to Russia, which directly violate the relevant Security Council resolutions, are absolutely unacceptable. Such transfers would not only exacerbate the situation in Ukraine, but also severely undermine the non-proliferation regime. In addition, we are deeply concerned about the potential for any transfer of nuclear- or ballistic missile-related technology to North Korea, which would further threaten the peace and stability of the region, as well as across the globe. We call on North Korea and Russia to abide by their obligations under all relevant Security Council resolutions and immediately cease all activities that violate them.

In conclusion, Japan demands that North Korea immediately and fully comply with all relevant resolutions, engage in diplomacy and resume substantive dialogue. The path to dialogue remains open. The world is watching to see whether we, in the Chamber, can fulfil our responsibility.

Ms. Gatt (Malta): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his informative briefing.

The ongoing, relentless advancement of the nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is illegal and deeply concerning. In 2023 alone, the country has carried out four intercontinental ballistic missile launches.

We meet today following the most recent launch of a military reconnaissance satellite by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in violation

of multiple Security Council resolutions, despite many international calls to refrain from engaging in such actions. This is a threat to international peace and security, and we condemn it in the strongest possible terms. Malta remains firm in its belief that such acts increase tensions and further destabilize the region. They pose a serious threat to international peace and security and erode the global non-proliferation regime.

The launch was reportedly successful in placing the satellite in orbit. That, in itself, is a very worrisome development. Even more troubling, the country's space agency stated that the launch "will make a significant contribution to definitely ramping up the war preparedness of the armed forces of the Republic". It further stated that it would send multiple reconnaissance satellites in the near future. The Council cannot remain silent or turn a blind eye in the face of this situation.

Malta is gravely concerned that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has successfully obtained technical guidance from another country to complete this launch. That is not only unacceptable, in itself, but also a clear violation of the obligations under the resolution 1718 (2006) sanctions regime concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must cease all confrontations, engage in meaningful dialogue with all parties and adhere to its obligations under Security Council resolutions. It must completely, verifiably and irreversibly abandon its nuclear and ballistic missiles programmes and return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

Persistent Council divisions and failures to speak with one voice to condemn those actions have only emboldened the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This most recent launch clearly confirms it. As the guarantor of international peace and security, the Council should act accordingly.

Malta also remains deeply concerned about the dire humanitarian situation and the grave human rights violations perpetrated by the regime. They are inextricably linked to the advancement of its programme of weapons of mass destruction and cannot be neglected. A reopening of borders to international humanitarian staff is essential to allow United Nations agencies to carry out a rapid needs assessment in the country.

In conclusion, we reiterate that the only way to achieve peace and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is by ensuring that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea refrains from further provocations and dangerous actions. For that, we need a united Security Council, and we cannot afford to wait any longer.

Mr. Fernandes (Mozambique): I wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his information and important update on this topic. I also acknowledge the presence of the Permanent Representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea in the Chamber.

Mozambique expresses its deep concern about the launch of the Malligyong-1 reconnaissance satellite from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's Sohae Satellite Launching Station on 21 November. The missile launch reportedly used ballistic missile technology.

It is important to remind ourselves again that the situation in the Korean peninsula is highly sensitive and that all activities that could contribute to worsening or igniting the situation are to be avoided. That includes the launch of a military reconnaissance satellite and the conduct of military exercises in the region.

The Security Council has repeatedly emphasized the need for dialogue towards sustainable peace and the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We therefore urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respect and adhere to all Security Council resolutions and to commit to denuclearization and help resolve this persistent crisis in the Korean peninsula.

We also reiterate our call for all interested parties involved in the issue of non-regulation on the Korean peninsula to act with the utmost caution and responsibility. It is imperative to avoid any unilateral actions that could exacerbate the already tenuous détente in the region.

The issue of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is critical, not only for the Korean peninsula, but throughout the world. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology while promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

In that context, nuclear technology can play a better role in the development of humankind, for the health

and well-being of populations. Such technology is also used to produce electricity, which, if well managed, is a clean and reliable source of energy. However, it is important to ensure that nuclear technology is used for peaceful purposes and not for other harmful purposes, which, in turn lead to regional, if not global, insecurity and instability.

Mozambique reiterates its call for the need to intensify diplomatic engagement and seize all available opportunities to persuade the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to resume constructive dialogue, accepting the goodwill of the international community.

While acknowledging the need to safeguard the genuine security concerns of the parties, Mozambique appeals to all members of the Security Council not to block or waver in any decisive action aimed at seeking a permanent solution to this serious threat to the peace and prosperity of the Korean peninsula and the region, at large.

In fact, the growing tension on the Korean peninsula and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's determination to continue developing its technical capabilities make it imperative to opt for the path to dialogue in order to achieve the desired peace in the region.

Mozambique reiterates its stance that peaceful dialogue and negotiations are the best way to resolve differences in the Korean peninsula. In that regard, we call for practical measures to curb tensions and create a space for diplomacy, emphasizing the importance of re-establishing communication channels and reversing the current dangerous dynamics. Diplomacy and dialogue, not isolation, is the only way forward.

Dame Barbara Woodward (United Kingdom): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing, and I welcome the participation of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at this meeting.

As we have heard, we are meeting because, on 21 November, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea made a third attempt at launching a military reconnaissance satellite. It triggered Japan's local alert system in Okinawa, forcing civilians to take shelter. That was followed by a ballistic missile launch on 22 November. Those are clear threats to global peace and security, which is the core responsibility of the Council, and they violate multiple Security Council resolutions.

Moreover, those launches follow increased engagement between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including Kim Jong Un's visit to Vostochny Cosmodrome in September, where he met President Putin. When asked by a reporter whether Russia would help North Korea launch its own satellites and rockets, President Putin responded, "That is exactly why we came here. The leader of North Korea shows great interest in space." We have, in addition, credible reports of Russia sourcing weapons from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. All that, as Assistant Secretary-General Khiari said, has humanitarian consequences. The North Korean people suffer the most as resources are diverted.

What should the Council do? Some argue that the Council should remain silent and avoid escalating the situation. But the Democratic People's Republic of Korea shows no sign of restraint in response. In fact, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has stated its intention to launch more satellites. That follows 29 launches of ballistic missiles so far this year, including four intercontinental ballistic missiles. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has written its nuclear aspirations into its Constitution. What should we do?

First, I welcome the participation of Democratic People's Republic of Korea in today's debate. Above all, I hope its representative will report to Pyongyang our concern for the people of Democratic People's Republic of Korea. And in that respect, I encourage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reopen its borders and re-engage with United Nations agencies.

Secondly, the Council should reiterate the depth of its resolve to combating proliferation. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cease its arms supply and abide by its public commitment not to sell arms to Russia.

Thirdly, we urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cease those launches, return to dialogue and take credible steps towards denuclearization and peace on the Korean peninsula.

I urge the Council to demonstrate its commitment to ensure that our resolutions are enforced and to send a united message to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

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

representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea in our deliberations.

Switzerland noted with great concern the launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, after two attempts earlier this year, of a military reconnaissance satellite, using ballistic missile technology. We note that the most recent launch was carried out ahead of the time indicated in the notice to the Japanese authorities, thereby nullifying the purpose of the warning. Switzerland condemns all launches using ballistic missile technology, as they are violations of the Council's resolutions. The Council must not remain passive in the face of the tests which, together with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear programme, constitute a threat to international peace and security.

Allow me to emphasize three points.

First, any launch using ballistic missile technology is a violation of international law, including Security Council resolutions. As we discussed at our meetings in June (see S/PV.9336) and August (see S/PV.9406), the issues of rocket payload or advance notification are not decisive in this situation. The Council should therefore condemn and respond to the launches. We reiterate our call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to renounce any future attempts to launch ballistic missiles.

Secondly, while the obligations arising from the resolutions apply first and foremost to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, they also apply to all States, which are required to effectively implement the Security Council's sanctions. Furthermore, as States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we are obliged to combat the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Cooperation projects in the fields of space and armaments are, as a matter of principle, incompatible with Security Council sanctions, unless previously exempted by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006). Attempts to legitimize the development of a nuclear programme by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea itself or by other States require our continued vigilance. We must commit to disarmament and to maintaining the nuclear taboo.

Thirdly, let us not forget the plight of the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Serious and systematic violations of human rights and the impunity of the perpetrators must cease. We welcome signs that

the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is easing its heavy restrictions in connection with the pandemic. Those restrictions are a major obstacle to humanitarian aid and to the respect and exercise of human rights. The opening of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's borders must go hand in hand with rapid, safe and unhindered access for humanitarian assistance. To that end, the entry of international personnel into the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is essential.

The Council plays an indispensable role in encouraging dialogue, de-escalation and the exploration of diplomatic solutions. We should strengthen, not weaken, the few confidence-building measures, in particular those aimed at reducing the risk of military confrontation, such as the 2018 agreement between the two Koreas. As recommended by the New Agenda for Peace, we must reverse the deterioration of international norms aimed at preventing the spread and use of nuclear weapons. We must also strengthen prevention and mediation. Moreover, we encourage the United Nations to step up its efforts in that domain. That will facilitate the implementation of a peaceful, comprehensive and lasting solution to the situation on the Korean peninsula. We have a common goal and a shared responsibility in that regard. Switzerland will remain committed to peace and stability in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his briefing. I also welcome the participation of the Permanent Representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and of the Republic of Korea in this meeting.

Gabon is concerned about the launch of a military reconnaissance satellite and its placement in Earth's orbit by the Democratic Republic of Korea on 21 November. The missile launch adds to a long list of such launches since the beginning of the year and increases the security threat on the Korean peninsula. The regular alerts caused by those missile launches are not only an unbearable source of stress for the people in the region but also a veritable danger for air and maritime navigation.

My country condemns the new missile launch and calls on the parties concerned to open channels for discussion to find a lasting solution to this situation, which has become untenable. We remain convinced that it is through dialogue that a lasting and mutually satisfactory solution can be reached.

The threat of the use of nuclear weapons is becoming increasingly urgent. The dismantling of disarmament agreements and the reversals of certain countries regarding their commitments to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are contributing to the current situation, which is marked by the trivialization of the use of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

The levels of tension and the lack of progress in talks since 2018 on the situation on the Korean peninsula is particularly worrisome. It is essential that the parties be able to work towards the necessary de-escalation and rebuild trust in order to find a diplomatic solution. Negotiation remains the best way to find common ground among the various parties and achieve the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. It is vital that the international community reaffirm its determination to strive for the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula for the peaceful coexistence of the countries in the region.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming my country's desire to see a world that is free of weapons of mass destruction and free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. França Danese (Brazil): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing, and I welcome the participation of the representatives of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at this meeting. I thank the United States of America and other fellow Security Council members for requesting this meeting.

Once again, Brazil joins the international community in condemning the use of ballistic missile technology in the launch of a satellite launch vehicle by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 21 November. While Brazil fully recognizes the right of all countries to pursue peaceful space programmes, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must strictly comply with all of its obligations under international law and Council resolutions. The launch of the satellite launch vehicle before the opening of the launch window announced by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea posed risks to aircraft, ships and civilian populations in the region. Above all, the withdrawal from the comprehensive military agreement between South Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of 2018 is a step backwards, away from dialogue and peaceful understanding. That development could lead to accidents and misunderstandings along the inter-Korean border, which would put the security of

the entire world at risk. We urge all parties to return to the negotiating table and avoid any measures that could further escalate the already tense situation.

Beyond the use of ballistic missile technology, we are also concerned about what the latest launch represents for a broader process of militarization of space and for regional stability. The placement into orbit of the Malligyong-1 reconnaissance satellite and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's statement that it would launch several reconnaissance satellites in a short span of time suggest that the dynamics of competition in the region are entering a new phase — a phase with greater use of space assets to enhance warfighting capabilities. The General Assembly has been actively engaged in discussions on space security precisely to create a framework of binding and non-binding norms that allow us to manage the growing competition in outer space. This most recent launch further illustrates the need for such a framework. That is why we urge Council members to redouble their efforts towards finding a common path forward in these discussions.

Over the past two years, we have seen the Democratic People's Republic of Korea make significant military advances. We have seen them add two new classes of intercontinental ballistic missiles to their arsenal — one of them solid-fuelled — and test a new intermediate-range missile that overflew Japan last year. The successful launch of a spy satellite is the latest step in a long series of unconstrained advances. This adds tension to a situation that should be tackled by negotiation based on good political will and good diplomacy. That is why we are now more convinced than ever that we need a new approach to this file. We have reiterated that the Council must do more, but that doing more does not mean doing more of the same, as we keep doing here every time there is a new launch. We see the need for three "C"s in this file: creativity, compromise and collaboration. We need creativity to explore new approaches to the file, such as making better use of the Council's Chapter VI toolkit. We need compromise, because views are so far apart that we must begin to work on whatever we can agree, no matter how basic that may be. Lastly, we need more collaboration at the expert level. In the past two years, we were never as close to consensus as when all of our experts were meeting regularly to share ideas and work on text. More regular collaboration at the expert level can prevent these meetings from becoming reiterations of 15 distinct and well-known national views.

We have been encouraged by discussions that we have had with Council members who have shared our interest in finding new ways to make progress. We have talked with most members about a greater role for the United Nations in promoting contacts with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and convincing the country to trust diplomacy and the good offices of its fellow United Nations Member States. We intend to continue to take those ideas forward, and we hope to have at least rekindled the discussion on new ideas for achieving a Korean peninsula that is peaceful, stable and free of nuclear weapons.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We listened closely to the briefing by Assistant Secretary-General Khiari, and we also welcome the participation in the meeting of the permanent representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea.

Russia is concerned about the rapid development of a new cycle of escalation on the Korean peninsula. Over the past few months, we have been hearing from Washington and its allies in the region regular alarmist signals about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea building up its ballistics programme, which is a threat to its national security. At every opportunity, the United States delegation convenes the Security Council to portray itself almost as the victim of a situation that was allegedly created by Pyongyang alone.

However, let us broaden the scope of today's subject slightly and look at the current state of affairs in the region as a whole. In March, we drew the Council's attention to the bellicose manoeuvres of the United States, Japan and the Republic of Korea that were conducted in direct proximity to the borders of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Even back then, the allies' Freedom Shield and Ssangyong military exercises, under the leadership of Washington, were of a stunning scale. It seemed to many that the region had reached a dangerous threshold, beyond which the possibilities for a political settlement would be reduced to nought. Unfortunately, since then, the proper conclusions have not been drawn, and the show of United States military force thousands of kilometres from its borders continues to break records. Thus far this year, the allies have already conducted six joint exercises with the direct involvement of the American armed forces.

Let us just look at the most recent examples. On 15 November, for the second time in the space of a

month, two United States B-52 strategic bombers arrived on the territory of the peninsula. On 16 November, in the Sea of Japan, the most recent major exercises of the United States and Republic of Korea navies came to an end. They involved heavy offensive weapons, including destroyers, fighters and helicopters. On 21 November, the port of Busan was visited by a United States carrier strike group led by the aircraft carrier *USS Carl Vinson*, one month after it was visited by another American aircraft carrier, the *USS Ronald Reagan*. It is very interesting to hear from the United States delegation how those actions are in line with the requirements of resolution 2397 (2017), paragraph 27, regarding the need to work to reduce tensions in the Korean peninsula and beyond.

Today the Council was convened in relation to the rocket launch from the territory of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of a reconnaissance satellite, which triggered a very sharp reaction in the West. Russia does not support the steps of any of the parties that run counter to the aims of establishing long-term peace in the region. At the same time, when assessing this news, we suggest taking note of the fact that, back on 7 November, we learned about Seoul's plans to launch, at the end of the month, their first reconnaissance satellite from America's Vandenberg base. Moreover, it is also noteworthy that the Government of the Republic of Korea, by way of a retaliatory measure, took the decision to partially suspend the effect of the inter-Korean military agreement of 2018, which plays an important role in maintaining stability and preventing armed incidents in the area of the military demarcation line. Those steps could only provoke a retaliatory response. We are also concerned about the conflicting signals from Tokyo and Seoul, the United States' allies in North-East Asia, about their so-called strengthened cooperation with Washington in the nuclear arena, which can certainly be interpreted as allowing for the possibility of American nuclear weapons to be deployed on their territory as well as the possibility of developing their own nuclear weapons. Incidentally, we once again heard no due assessment of those provocative steps by the Secretariat today.

Russia has consistently advocated for a peaceful settlement of the entire range of problems on the Korean peninsula exclusively through political and diplomatic means, without external pressure or blackmail. The Russian-Chinese political and humanitarian draft resolution remains on the table. Its adoption could constitute a genuinely constructive contribution by the

Council to resolving the current difficult situation on the Korean peninsula.

We heard several delegations accuse Russia today of so-called illegal military-technical cooperation between it and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Such suggestions are baseless. Russia complies responsibly with its international obligations, which does not prevent us from developing traditional relations of friendship and cooperation with our neighbours, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, founded on long-standing historical roots. Behind the attempts to smear Russia in the context of the situation on the Korean peninsula is a desire to divert the Council's attention from the real causes of instability in the region, which are linked to the United States' ambitions to strangle Pyongyang at any cost. Looking at the situation in a broader context, it is becoming clear that Washington has virtually no leverage left over Pyongyang — something that is increasingly being discussed in the expert community. However, rather than relentlessly seeking to establish influence, perhaps it is time for Washington to consider extending the hand of mutually respectful dialogue to Pyongyang. Every undertaking requires gradual steps, but so far any such steps are going in the exact opposite direction.

We urge the parties to refrain from dangerous actions that could lead to a large-scale conflict. Everything we are seeing suggests that we are witnessing an endless vicious circle in which the military-political triangle led by the United States is provoking a further escalation of tensions rather than facilitating the settlement of relations between neighbours. Against that backdrop, it should be no surprise that when a huge nuclear Power is trying to back Pyongyang into a corner, Pyongyang does everything it possibly can in the interests of its own self-defence.

We believe that an endless discussion of the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea's violations and consequent punitive measures is a pointless path. No significant efforts will be made to break the current deadlock until the parties demonstrate a genuine interest in ensuring security in the region.

Mr. Abudu-Birresborn (Ghana): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing to the Council and welcome the participation of the Permanent Representatives of the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in this meeting.

While the Council's attention has been focused elsewhere, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has continued to develop its capabilities in breach of multiple Security Council resolutions. Ghana is gravely concerned about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's launch of a military reconnaissance satellite on 21 November, the third such launch in the past six months. Those acts by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are in violation of its international obligations, as expressed in multiple Security Council resolutions. We deplore the latest launch and call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully comply with its international obligations, as expressed in the relevant Council resolutions, by refraining from further launches using ballistic-missile technology.

The anti-proliferation mechanisms that once served as guardrails by keeping nuclear ambitions in check are failing. The North Korean nuclear impasse is part of that trend. We continue to see an erosion of trust and a spike in political polarization on this file, which has paralysed the Council and rendered it unable to act. But after years of very little or no progress, we must resist the temptation to do nothing, because the cost of inaction is far greater than the cost of action. In that regard, we continue to urge the international community to implement pragmatic measures while simultaneously pursuing long-term engagement within a multilateral framework arrangement to restrict the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's weapons development programme. More specifically, we would like to share some priority areas of action.

First, at the heart of pragmatic solutions is the urgent need to rebuild trust, solidarity and mutual respect through dialogue and diplomacy, taking the concerns of all members into consideration. After three years, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is showing signs of reopening to the world. Recent bilateral engagements with its neighbours and with the Council are critical first steps in trust- and confidence-building. Diplomatic channels of communication between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, its neighbours and other stakeholders through regular in-person meetings should be prioritized as pandemic restrictions are gradually lifted. We continue to urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to expedite action on permitting the return of the United Nations country team, as well as other aid agencies.

Secondly, sanctions are an important component of the Security Council's toolbox for the maintenance

of international peace and security. However, they are not an end in themselves. While we commend the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) for its proactive approach to addressing the humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea within the framework of exemptions to the existing sanctions, we must address the unintended consequences of sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea swiftly and comprehensively. It is also important to evaluate the Democratic People's Republic of Korea sanctions regime thoroughly to better understand the gaps that have enabled sanctions overrides and the unhindered facilitation of its nuclear weapons programme.

Thirdly, a comprehensive multilateral security solution to the issues on the Korean peninsula is essential. As is often said, it is vital to seek regional solutions to regional problems. Over the years, however, conflicting national interests among regional actors have hindered successful and coordinated multilateral security efforts to resolve the issues on the Korean peninsula. It is time for regional actors and other key stakeholders to lead the efforts to address the security and development challenges in their region.

In conclusion, we recognize that the threat posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to international security is serious and growing. As a Council, we must find better ways of sustaining the Council's unity on the matter and pursuing long-term engagement within a multilateral framework arrangement to restrict the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's weapons development programme. Where difficult options must be embraced, we should be bold in accepting them, because time may not be on the side of the Council if we wait too long. Our responsibility is to steer the region away from a path of catastrophe and preserve peace and lives on the peninsula.

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

The United Arab Emirates strongly condemns yet another launch of a military reconnaissance satellite by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea using ballistic-missile technology. Not only does it blatantly defy Security Council resolutions, but it follows a record high number of similar violations over the past

two years. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's actions are a source of major concern, as they increase tensions on the Korean peninsula and undermine the global non-proliferation regime. We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to desist from its activities, which are a flagrant violation of international law. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's satellite launch violates the Council's prohibition regarding that country's use of ballistic-missile technology. In fact, it may have been pursued in order to conduct yet another illicit test of long-range ballistic-missile technology. It is imperative that those provocative actions come to an end. For today's meeting, I would like to make three points.

First, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must immediately cease all launches and testing involving ballistic-missile technology, as has been repeatedly stipulated in Security Council resolutions. Even though the authorities in Pyongyang issued early warnings to Japan, such warnings do not confer legitimacy to launches. We therefore call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to adhere to international law and Security Council resolutions and refrain from conducting future illegal launches.

Secondly, the Council must send a strong unified message to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea condemning its provocative behaviour and encouraging dialogue. We reiterate that diplomacy and de-escalation are the only path to achieve peace and security on the Korean peninsula. Restraint is critical to avoid unintended escalation. Engagement, not isolation, is the only way forward. The calls for dialogue have been repeated many times, and it is time for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to heed them.

Thirdly, the humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to be a source of serious concern, especially given that recent United Nations reports indicate that a staggering 45 per cent of the population — approximately 12 million people — are in need of humanitarian assistance. As the country gradually reopens its borders, we emphasize the urgency of resuming on-the-ground humanitarian activities by international humanitarian agencies. We hope that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will prioritize their return to the country, including that of the United Nations Resident Coordinator.

The ultimate objective is clear: to achieve the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its

return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Therefore, we call on Council members, together with the Secretary-General, to reinvigorate diplomatic efforts to resume peace talks and deter and curb the nuclear-weapon and ballistic-missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Unified action today will lead to a safer tomorrow on the Korean peninsula.

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

I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing and welcome the Permanent Representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea to this meeting.

China has taken note of the satellite launch announced by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 22 November and of the reactions of the parties concerned. China has taken note of the series of launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the ongoing military activities of the countries concerned on the peninsula. China is deeply concerned about the escalation of antagonism and confrontation and the continued tension on the peninsula, which is in an increasingly downward spiral. If the situation on the peninsula is allowed to deteriorate in such a manner, it may eventually spiral out of control. It will only serve to jeopardize the fundamental interests of the countries of North-East Asia, undermine the efforts and gains made by all parties over the past several decades on the political settlement of the issue of the peninsula and add new upheaval and instability to an already troubled world, which is a source of great concern for China. This year, the Security Council has convened seven public meetings and a number of closed consultations to consider the nuclear issue in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. China has already made its position fully clear.

I would like to stress today only a few points.

First, the security of our countries is indivisible, and no country can pursue its own absolute security at the expense of others' security. If the Democratic People's Republic of Korea constantly feels threatened and its legitimate security concerns remain unresolved, the peninsula will be unable to resolve the security dilemma and find itself caught in a vicious cycle of tit-for-tat aggressive moves.

Secondly, the cause of the peninsula issue, which has remained unresolved for decades since the Cold War, lies in the absence of a peace mechanism. In line with the dual-track approach, all parties should promote, in parallel, denuclearization and the establishment of a peace mechanism on the peninsula and address, through dialogue and in a balanced manner, their respective legitimate concerns, including the legitimate security concerns of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That is the fundamental solution to resolving the question of the peninsula.

Thirdly, a favourable environment is indispensable for resolving the peninsula issue. While claiming to be concerned about tensions on the peninsula, the United States has taken the opportunity to strengthen military alliances, instigate bloc confrontation and mobilize its allies in military exercises, thereby further exacerbating tensions and confrontation on the peninsula. Such practices run counter to the goal of denuclearization and the maintenance of peace and stability on the peninsula.

Fourthly, history has taught us that dialogue and negotiation are the only right way to resolve the question of the peninsula. If the United States is sincere in its desire to unconditionally engage in dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and break the current impasse, it should refrain from pressure tactics, such as military exercises and the deployment of strategic weapons, devise practical and feasible proposals to rebuild mutual trust between the two sides and encourage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage in dialogue and negotiations.

Fifthly, the humanitarian issue can serve as a very good entry point for building trust and the resumption of dialogue. The draft resolution jointly proposed by China and Russia on the issue in the Council is aimed at easing the humanitarian situation in the country and creating the momentum and the conditions for the resumption of dialogue and changing the course of the situation. The significance of the draft resolution is even more pronounced given the current circumstances, and I hope that both parties will give it positive consideration.

Sixthly, the Security Council bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and naturally should also commit to ensuring the maintenance of peace and security on the peninsula. The Council should strive for de-escalation and the facilitation of dialogue and negotiation, rather than simply imposing sanctions and pressure, much less

convening meetings for the sake of meetings and talk for the sake of talk. Facilitating a political settlement and strengthening unity and mutual trust are key to preserving the Council's reputation and authority.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that, as a close neighbour of the peninsula and responsible major country, China has always committed to the maintenance of peace and stability on the peninsula and its denuclearization. We will continue to remain active in maintaining stability and promoting talks and play a constructive role in promoting the early resumption of engagement and dialogue between the parties in order to promote a political settlement to the question of the peninsula and the realization of long-term peace and stability in North-East Asia.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Song Kim (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Nearly 70 years have passed since the first artificial satellite was launched into space, and more than 5,000 satellites are now orbiting the Earth. However, the Security Council repeats its abnormal and absurd practice of making an issue of the launch of a satellite by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea alone. I strongly condemn and categorically reject, on behalf of the entire Korean people in their indignation, this Security Council meeting, convened at the outrageous demand of the United States and its follower States, to unjustly characterize the exercise of the sovereign right of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as it constitutes a flagrant violation of the sovereignty of our State and serious interference in its internal affairs.

The launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of a reconnaissance satellite is to get a clear picture of the dire military moves by the United States and its followers so that we can be fully prepared for them, given the fact that their aggressive nature is becoming increasingly clear as the days go by. It is a legitimate and righteous exercise of the right to self-defence, which fully belongs within the legal sphere of our self-defence. The United States has deployed vast strategic assets in and around the Korean peninsula on a constant stand-by basis and is pushing ahead with various plans of military action at a practical level to exhibit its excessive strength and use it under any pretext.

For that reason, the military and security landscape prevailing on the Korean peninsula and in the region is creating a hair-trigger danger. Only yesterday, with the participation of the United States nuclear aircraft carrier *USS Carl Vinson* and the nuclear-powered submarine *USS Santa Fe*, an enormous number of troops from the United States, the Republic of Korea and Japan staged a large-scale joint military exercise at the doorstep of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. There is no excuse for its aggressive nature. This year alone, the United States has introduced various strategic nuclear assets, including nuclear aircraft carriers and strategic nuclear submarines and bombers, in and around the Korean peninsula on almost 30 occasions, posing an open and direct military threat to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Nowhere in the world, or in the annals of history, can we find a precedent for a grave threat such as the one that the United States has presented to the national security of a Member State of the United Nations, along with its aggravation of the situation in the region by mobilizing its whole triad of strategic nuclear forces, which have even been joined by the troops of its allies. If such actions are not seen as a threat to global peace and security as defined in the Charter of the United Nations, there is no reason for the Security Council to exist and it should therefore dissolve itself today — right now.

The Korean peninsula and the region are in an unstable situation, owing to the expanding military manoeuvres of the United States and its followers. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched its reconnaissance satellite in order to handle the situation and assert decisive control over it and thereby prevent a new war from breaking out in the region. It was an inevitable undertaking and a minimum exercise of its right to self-defence. Furthermore, there is no other nation in the world in a security environment as critical as that of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Yet some of those other nations are launching a variety of military satellites into space with no restrictions. In that context, what is in question is the lawful and legitimate right of a sovereign State to develop, launch and operate multiple military and civilian satellites that it requires for its self-defence and in accordance with its plans for economic, scientific and technological development. And the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's launch of a reconnaissance satellite at this juncture is directly related to the unstable security environment in the region created by the reckless military actions of the United States and its followers.

Had the United States not openly mentioned the end of the regime of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; had it not made it a policy to use nuclear weapons against our State in the guise of a commitment to the provision of so-called extended deterrence and the enhanced regular visibility of strategic assets; had it not pursued the establishment of an Asian version of NATO and thereby created a security environment as dangerous as the one currently prevailing in and around the Korean peninsula, a communication or meteorological satellite launch for peaceful purposes could have been prioritized over a reconnaissance satellite in our State's efforts to explore outer space. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's right to the use of outer space is a proper and legitimate right of a sovereign State recognized by the Outer Space Treaty, which stipulates that,

“[o]uter space shall be free for exploration and use by all States without discrimination of any kind, on a basis of equality and in accordance with international law.”

As for the Security Council's sanctions resolutions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, on which the United States and some of its followers among Member States have based their criticism of our satellite launch, they are no more than illegal and unlawful pieces of paper that contravene the spirit and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations and a typical outcome of the heinous and hostile policy of the United States aimed at depriving our country of its sovereignty and its right to existence and development.

The United States keeps insisting that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is in violation of the Security Council resolutions because it has used ballistic-missile technology for its satellite launch. In that case, I have a question. Is the United States launching its satellites with a balloon or a catapult rather than a carrier rocket that uses the same technology as a ballistic missile? Anyone can see that such illogical arguments from the United States make neither political nor scientific sense and clearly demonstrate the absurdity of the Council's so-called sanctions resolutions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In the long run, I can say with good reason that the imposition by the United States and certain of its followers of Security Council sanctions resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is tantamount to demanding that we relinquish all

the rights of a sovereign State. Furthermore, it amounts to a declaration that they do not recognize our State.

The reconnaissance satellite launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has become an issue, whereas the same conduct by the United States and its allied forces is found to conform to international norms. Such a double-dealing criterion is one of the main factors driving the situation in and around the Korean peninsula to confrontation and conflict. Double standards are in fact a primary root cause that is tragically degrading the authority of the Security Council, which is entrusted with the important responsibility of maintaining international peace and security and which is provoking denunciation and derision on the part of the international community rather than respect. The prime mover in that situation is none other than the United States.

For the sake of peace and stability in the region and the rest of the world, the part of the international community that stands on the side of justice should no longer tolerate the prejudiced and politicized double standards of a handful of States and their exclusive group, which includes the United States. Reckless attempts to deprive the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its sovereign rights are no different from attempts to force it to disarm. Were the United States and its followers to try once again to encroach on our national sovereignty by invoking the implementation of the Security Council's irrational, unlawful and outrageous sanctions resolutions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it would inevitably trigger the exercise by a sovereign State of its legitimate right to self-defence enshrined in the Charter. Whether or not the current confrontation concerning the legitimate right of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to explore outer space develops into a physical conflict — or even the most serious possible situation, such as war — hinges entirely on the attitude of the United States.

The Security Council should not waste time and energy taking issue with the exercise of its legitimate right by a sovereign State overwhelmed by the arbitrariness and high-handedness of particular forces. It should pay greater attention to ending such substantial threats to international peace and security as the killing of civilians being perpetrated in the Middle East under the patronage and protection of the United States. Gone are the days when the United States' high-handedness was disguised as justice and its arbitrary practices

worked anywhere in the world. As I have already stated, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will proudly exercise its legitimate rights, including the right to launch satellites, no matter what obstacles stand in the way. It will fulfil its responsibility to reliably defend peace and security on the Korean peninsula and in the region from external threats of all hues.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): My gratitude goes to you, Mr. President, for convening this urgent meeting of the Security Council. My appreciation also goes to Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

The Republic of Korea condemns in the strongest possible terms the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's so-called military reconnaissance satellite launch on 21 November, local time, in flagrant violation of multiple Security Council resolutions. The launch took place earlier than the date specified on the issued notice to airmen, indicating that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea does not even bother to follow its own announcements, let alone ensure the safety of other countries. The launch was anything but peaceful. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's statement reads that,

“the launch will make a significant contribution to definitely ramping the war preparedness of the armed forces and secure their capability to reconnoitre the South Korean region.”

The launch also had nothing to do with the legitimate use of outer space. Article III of the Outer Space Treaty says that the exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's illegal activities have never fallen into this category. Any launch that uses ballistic-missile technology, regardless of its success or payload, can contribute to the further advancement of such technology, in particular intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) capable of delivering nuclear weapons. Because of that, multiple Security Council resolutions prohibit the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from carrying out any launch using ballistic-missile technology.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is now moving beyond violating the multiple Security Council resolutions on this issue almost to mockery of the decisions of the Council. The Democratic People's

Republic of Korea designated 18 November as its so-called missile industry day, commemorating the test launch of its Hwasong-17 ICBM on the same day last year. I cannot find any other country in the world that has a celebration on its calendar of an illegal activity explicitly banned by the Security Council. Furthermore, in September the Supreme People's Assembly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's rubber-stamp legislature, amended its Constitution in order to enshrine its nuclear policy, significantly lowering its threshold for using nuclear weapons, such as allowing for a pre-emptive nuclear attack on Seoul.

Today in this Chamber we are seeing the representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who three months ago, also in this Chamber, denied the legitimacy of the Security Council (see S/PV.9406), once again repeating the same absurd and unreasonable claims. It is deeply concerning to see the authority of this body repeatedly eroded and ridiculed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We need to act resolutely before it is too late to fix. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a determined and premeditated serial offender against its obligations under the Charter, in particular the obligation under its Article 25 to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's astonishing record of violations of agreements is not limited to international ones. It has unilaterally violated bilateral agreements with the Republic of Korea again and again. They include, to name only a few, the 4 July South-North joint statement in 1972; the Inter-Korean Basic Agreement in 1991; the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in 1992; the 15 June joint communiqué in 2000; the 4 October Declaration in 2007; the Panmunjom Declaration and the Comprehensive Military Agreement in 2018. The objectives of those agreements were to ease military tensions and build a peaceful Korean peninsula based on mutual respect. However, history has amply demonstrated that Pyongyang is ready to renege on the promise of dialogue and cooperation at any moment.

Violations of the Comprehensive Military Agreement are the latest case in point. Both sides were to refrain from any hostile military activities in or around the demilitarized zone or bordering areas, whether on land, at sea or in the air. A no-fly zone was established within kilometres of the military demarcation line of the demilitarized zone. Some guard posts were to be

removed from the demilitarized zone. However, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea abused and virtually nullified the agreement by infiltrating drones into the Seoul area and firing artillery rounds into the coast off the Republic of Korea, for example. Those are only a few of the 17 explicit violations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, not counting thousands of other relatively minor violations. Moreover, we have seen it launch military reconnaissance satellites three times this year, and it has announced additional launches in the near future. With its satellite launch, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is attempting to advance not only its ICBM technology but also its reconnaissance capability. The Republic of Korea cannot sit idly with its hands tied any more.

As a necessary measure for protecting our national security and the safety of our people, my Government has decided to suspend a portion of the Comprehensive Military Agreement that pertains to the establishment of no-fly zones. It is a minimum defensive measure aimed at restoring reconnaissance activities that had been conducted normally before the Comprehensive Military Agreement was signed. Regrettably, but not surprisingly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's Defence Ministry announced on 23 November that it will never be bound by the Comprehensive Military Agreement and forward-deployed its military assets in the area near the demilitarized zone, threatening us with a possible high-intensity provocation. That is yet another clear example showing the degree to which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is unfaithful to its own promises on inter-Korean agreements. Yet it has tried to shift the responsibility to the Republic of Korea and is threatening further provocative actions.

My delegation would like to emphasize that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's provocative behaviour is no longer a regional issue but one of global concern directly affecting all parts of the world. Left unchecked, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's proliferation of weapons and military technology — whether conventional or even nuclear — will further aggravate insecurity around the globe. The recipients, in addition to belligerent States, could also be terrorists or other non-State entities in any part of the world. For example, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is supplying ammunition to the Russian Federation in its war on Ukraine. My delegation is gravely concerned about the military cooperation between the Russian Federation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. All arms

transfers to or from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as technical cooperation concerning its weapons programmes — whether conventional or nuclear — directly violate multiple Security Council resolutions. As we have repeatedly emphasized in this Chamber, all Member States must implement all the relevant Council resolutions in full. However, if Security Council members violate the resolutions in a deliberate and flagrant manner, or do not implement them faithfully, all of our efforts in the Council will count for nothing. It is important to remind the Council once again that the Russian Federation itself voted in favour of all 10 substantive sanctions resolutions from 2006 up until 2017, including resolution 1718 (2006), establishing an arms embargo. We therefore urge Russia to abide by the resolutions and immediately cease its illicit activities.

It is regrettable that we are once again hearing the same misleading arguments today, a fallacy of false equivalence. For more than three decades, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been developing its unlawful nuclear and ballistic-missile programme, based on its own playbook. The root cause lies in the nature of the regime of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea itself, not the so-called hostile policies of the Republic of Korea or the United States, which are non-existent. Pyongyang's ever-growing threats are the very reason that the Republic of Korea is strengthening its extended deterrence cooperation with the United States, not the other way around, as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea claims. It is a legitimate defensive effort in response to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's increasingly menacing nuclear and missile threats. A responsible Government should protect the lives and safety of its people.

It is also regrettable that some erroneous arguments being presented here represent a false comparison. Our satellite launch is completely legal and was correctly announced beforehand. It is not prohibited by Council resolutions, and neither does it pose any threat to international peace and security. It has nothing to do with the development of ICBM technology. The opposite is true of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's launch, which is illegal, threatening and conducive to the development of ICBMs.

I would once again like to emphasize the importance of the Council's unity in condemning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and in

faithfully implementing the resolutions of the Council. Let us unite together against this repeat offender and take a determined step in the name of the Council. I also stress that the door for dialogue and negotiations remains wide open, without any preconditions. We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from further escalatory actions, fulfil its international obligations and return to diplomacy.

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

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to take the floor once again, and I will try to be as brief as possible. We have heard 13 Member States sitting around this table call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cease its unlawful testing. The message is therefore clear. It is a violation of Security Council resolutions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea claims that it is acting in self-defence, but as the Council knows, that argument really does not stand up here, as the military exercises of the United States and the Republic of Korea are routine and defensive in nature. And we intentionally reduce risk and pursue transparency by announcing the exercises in advance, including the dates and the activities — unlike the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its launches using ballistic-missile technology. And unlike its actions, ours are not prohibited by Council resolutions.

We therefore strongly reject the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's disingenuous claim that its missile launches are merely defensive in nature in response to our bilateral and trilateral military exercises. And I think that the chronology of events reveals the truth, because 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 conducted six intercontinental ballistic-missile (ICBM) launches that year, and its efforts to reconstitute its nuclear test sites were already under way. I also want to reiterate a statement made by my Chinese colleague in which he said that,

“the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's pursuit of self-defence cannot come at the expense of the security of its neighbours or the global non-proliferation regime”.

Secondly, I would like to mention the Chinese-Russian so-called humanitarian resolution,

which in our view applauds the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for not conducting intermediate-range ballistic-missile and ICBM launches. Sanctions relief in the face of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's unprecedented launches would send only one signal, and that is disregard for the Council — and a violation of international law would be overlooked. I think that the Security Council cannot be engaged in that. I think that if either Russia or China wants to assist on the humanitarian side, they can do that, and can continue to do it bilaterally.

On the humanitarian situation, I would just like to mention that we do remain deeply concerned. But I think if Council members look at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's recent actions, they will understand what its priorities are. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has allowed in Chinese and Russian diplomats. It has allowed in members of the World Anti-Doping Agency to enable its athletes to travel. But United Nations aid agencies are still forbidden from providing the humanitarian assistance that we know is needed in that country. I would once again like to express our sincere offer of dialogue without preconditions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea need only accept it.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Song Kim (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I would like to say a few words about the comments by the Ambassador of the United States. Self-defence is a legitimate right of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is very important that we correctly understand a key element of the relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States. They are not merely relations between unfriendly countries without diplomatic relations, but relations between belligerent countries that have been in a state of war technically, legally and practically for seven decades. In the circumstances, one belligerent party — the United States — is threatening us with nuclear weapons. It is the legitimate right of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as another belligerent party, to develop, test, manufacture and possess weapon systems equivalent to those that the United States already possesses or is developing right now. I want to once again clearly reiterate our position that we are exercising our legitimate right to self-

defence in order to cope with a military threat from the United States.

The United States Ambassador also said that the door is open for diplomacy. But the most important thing to do is to create an environment conducive to diplomacy and dialogue. The United States has repeatedly said that it has no hostile intentions to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, but that is merely empty talk. From the first day of the foundation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the United States has not recognized our sovereignty, has treated us as an enemy State and has shown open hostility towards us. That hostility is not at all abstract. The military threats and double standards, such as we those we heard about here today, are the hostile acts that we are facing from the United States and that we face every day, month and year. Unless the persistent military threats against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are eliminated, our efforts will therefore focus on continuing to strengthen our capability to defend our dignity and safety and the interests of our State.

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

Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America): Let me add one thing. The United States has never fired any weapons towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We are working with our allies to help them in the protection of their sovereignty against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's actions, which are based on paranoia about a possible attack by the United States. If there is anything that the United States wants to provide to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, it is humanitarian assistance for its people, not weapons to destroy them.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Song Kim (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I cannot agree with the comment just made by the representative of the United States, because the United States mobilizes strategic assets such as its B-52H strategic nuclear bomber aircraft carrier and

nuclear submarines for joint military drills. Those strategic assets are not for defence. They are highly offensive military hardware specializing in strategic strike ambitions. In that regard, the strategic assault that the United States is mobilizing through joint military exercises is therefore aiming weapons to attack the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That is our challenge. If the United States really wishes for peace and stability through diplomacy, it must immediately stop all joint military exercises conducted under various code names.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now share some remarks in my capacity as the representative of China.

Just now, the United States representative quoted me in her second statement. Regrettably, the quote is not very accurate. In order to ensure that China's position is better and more clearly understood, I would like to repeat some of my remarks.

The security of all countries is indivisible. No country can pursue its absolute security at the expense of the security of others. If the Democratic People's Republic of Korea constantly feels threatened and their legitimate security concerns cannot be resolved, then the peninsula cannot truly solve the security dilemma.

That is what I said just now, and I simply wanted to reiterate it.

In conclusion, I would also like to point out to the main parties and to the stakeholders of the Korean peninsula that are here, at this table, that I have listened attentively to their statements. In my view, the positions are very far apart and even conflicting. I think that this also means that the early resumption of engagement, building mutual trust and dialogue is very important.

China is ready to make continuous efforts in that regard, and we hope that all parties and stakeholders concerned will make efforts to that end.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

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

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.