



# Security Council

Eightieth year

## 9833<sup>rd</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 8 January 2025, 3 p.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Bendjama . . . . .	(Algeria)
<i>Members:</i>	China . . . . .	Mr. Geng Shuang
	Denmark . . . . .	Ms. Lassen
	France . . . . .	Mr. Dharmadhikari
	Greece . . . . .	Mr. Sekeris
	Guyana . . . . .	Ms. Persaud
	Pakistan . . . . .	Mr. Akram
	Panama . . . . .	Mr. Alfaro de Alba
	Republic of Korea . . . . .	Mr. Hwang
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sierra Leone . . . . .	Mr. George
	Slovenia . . . . .	Mrs. Blokar Drobič
	Somalia . . . . .	Mr. Yusuf
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Dame Barbara Woodward
	United States of America . . . . .	Ms. Shea

## Agenda

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

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

**The President:** 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 Japan 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 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 now give the floor to Mr. Khiari.

**Mr. Khiari:** On 6 January at noon, local time, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched what it described as a new type of intermediate-range hypersonic ballistic missile, loaded with a hypersonic glide vehicle. According to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's official statement, the missile flew in line with its predetermined flight trajectory at a speed amounting to 12 times the speed of sound and landed in the open sea. While stating that the launch had no negative impact on the security of neighbouring countries, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea regrettably did not issue airspace or maritime safety notifications.

The statement reported that the system can "deal a serious military strike to a rival by effectively breaking any of its dense defensive barriers". Hypersonic glide vehicles travel at at least five times the speed of sound and make evasive manoeuvres, making defence measures against the weapon much more difficult.

The launch of yet another ballistic missile by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is of serious concern. This was the fourth launch of an intermediate-range ballistic missile since the beginning of 2024. In the same time period, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has also launched one intercontinental ballistic missile and multiple short-range ballistic missiles. It also attempted to launch a military reconnaissance satellite.

In addition, the display of an undeclared enrichment facility in Kangson and the ongoing commissioning of the light-water reactor at Yongbyon are clear violations of Security Council resolutions, as are the continued launches of missiles using ballistic missile technology.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been actively working towards acquiring new military capabilities in line with its current five-year military development plan, which is entering its final year in 2025. The plan has called for the development of what the Democratic People's Republic of Korea calls tactical nuclear weapons — super-large nuclear warheads, various intermediate- and long-range ballistic missile capabilities, military reconnaissance satellites and a nuclear submarine, among other materiel. In late December, at its ruling party's end-of-year plenary session, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea emphasized that 2025 should see the successful completion of the five-year plan.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's persistent pursuit of its nuclear and ballistic programmes continues to undermine the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It also escalates tensions and contributes to further isolating

the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from the international community. We continue our calls to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully comply with its international obligations.

As we enter 2025, amid growing challenges to global peace and security, it is imperative to ease tensions on the Korean Peninsula. The Secretary-General has consistently called for de-escalation and the urgent resumption of talks. Diplomatic engagement remains the only pathway to sustainable peace and a complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. In that respect, we welcome offers to engage in dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea without preconditions.

The Council must also remain attentive to the humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We reiterate the call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to expedite the return of the United Nations country team and on the international community to strengthen support for its people and advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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

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

**Ms. Shea** (United States of America): I thank the Assistant Secretary-General for his briefing.

The United States condemns in the strongest possible terms the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's launch on 6 January of an intermediate-range ballistic missile, in direct violation of multiple Security Council resolutions. That launch, and each of the more than 100 ballistic launches that it has carried out since the beginning of 2022, is a flagrant violation of the Security Council's resolutions. Each test informs the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its capability gaps and allows Pyongyang to further advance its weapons programmes.

It is no mystery why the Democratic People's Republic of Korea feels emboldened to carry out unlawful ballistic missile launches with impunity. For the past two years, Russia and China have muzzled the Council from acting. In March, Russia ended the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), through its capricious use of the veto (see S/PV.9591). Russia and China also blocked a straightforward, factual press statement noting that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's intercontinental ballistic missile launch in October had violated multiple Security Council resolutions.

Those actions coincide with Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's ongoing military cooperation in Russia's war against Ukraine, which violates both the Charter of the United Nations and arms restrictions established by the Council, specifically the two-way arms embargo on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, set out in resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009) and 2270 (2016), which prohibits all States Members of the United Nations from receiving arms, materiel, arms training and assistance from, or providing them to, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

To date, since December 2023, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has transferred more than 20,000 shipping containers of munitions, containing at least 6 million heavy artillery rounds and well in excess of 100 ballistic missiles to Russia for use against Ukraine. Those missiles have subsequently been launched into Ukraine, impacting civilian infrastructure and populated areas, such as Kyiv and Zaporizhzhya. In addition to munitions, Russia has now also turned to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for manpower in order to carry out its war of aggression, welcoming more than 12,000 Democratic People's Republic of Korea troops onto its

soil. Since December 2024, we have seen Democratic People's Republic of Korea troops join in the fighting in Kursk, marking the first time that they had participated in large-scale ground combat operations in more than 70 years and the first time they had done so outside the Korean Peninsula. It is also the first time since the Second World War that Russia had invited a foreign force onto its territory for a military operation. In return for its support to Russia, Russia transferred air defence systems to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We are particularly concerned about Moscow's intent to share with Pyongyang satellite and space technologies, which are crucial to an army's communications and intelligence-gathering capabilities on the modern battlefield, as we have seen in Ukraine. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is significantly benefiting from receiving Russian military equipment, technology and experience, which is rendering it more capable of waging war against its neighbours. In turn, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will likely be eager to leverage those improvements in order to promote weapons sales and military training contracts globally.

While we condemn the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's actions, the United States remains committed to a diplomatic solution to the challenges posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the negotiating table and engage in meaningful dialogue. The United States looks forward to working with all members of the Council to address that critical issue.

The Council must take seriously its responsibility to vigilantly monitor the implementation of binding Security Council sanctions measures, to counter the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's threats to international peace and security. We must work together to press Russia and China to address the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's unlawful ballistic missile launches and malicious cyberactivities, which threaten us all. We call on all Council members to support a united and clear denunciation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's destabilizing behaviour and for all Member States to fully and faithfully implement obligations under Security Council resolutions and to work together to prevent the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's procurement activities and revenue flows that support its unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes. The United States is ready to work with the rest of the Security Council to expeditiously reinstate the 1718 Committee Panel of Experts, which, for 15 years, provided public reporting that has benefited all Member States.

**Ms. Lassen** (Denmark): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

Today I wish to convey two messages.

First, let me start by strongly condemning the recent intermediate-range ballistic missile launch on 6 January by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's actions are unacceptable. The launch is a blatant violation of multiple Security Council resolutions. Once again, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is demonstrating its profound lack of respect for the Council and the global non-proliferation regime. That is why Denmark jointly called for this urgent meeting. The Council has repeatedly called on Pyongyang to comply with its obligations under international law and to cease its ballistic missile and weapons of mass destruction programmes. And let me be clear: the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must completely, verifiably and irreversibly dismantle the programmes and immediately return to compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other international safeguards. That latest launch is a sheer provocation and is deeply disturbing.

Secondly, Denmark is deeply concerned by this pattern of continued North Korean escalation — a pattern that clearly and dangerously increases the threat to regional and global peace and security. Since the start of 2022, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has recklessly launched more than 100 ballistic missiles of various types and ranges. We must not allow the sheer volume of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's launches to normalize its unlawful and destabilizing behaviour.

Furthermore, in the past year, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has illegally supplied ballistic missiles, as well as other weapons and ammunition, to support Russia's unlawful war of aggression against Ukraine. The deployment of thousands of North Korean troops to fight alongside Russian troops in this unprovoked war is a particularly grave concern and emphasizes that Indo-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic security are closely linked. This has happened despite sanctions imposed by the Council prohibiting the transfer of arms and related materials between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and any Member State of the United Nations. Yet a permanent member of the Council has decided to violate those resolutions.

In March we saw a veto (see S/PV.9591) of the renewal of the Panel of Experts assisting the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), a valuable instrument that the Council had supported and relied on for almost 15 years. That has weakened the Council's ability to monitor and address sanctions violations.

We also note a troubling statement by a Minister from a permanent member of the Council declaring that the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is off the table. That statement not only undermines the Council's long-standing efforts, but also emboldens Pyongyang to continue its destabilizing activities.

With every passing year, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear ambitions become increasingly evident. The international community must respond decisively. We must reinforce the implementation of sanctions and ensure that all diplomatic avenues are pursued to curb the country's unlawful and destabilizing activities.

In conclusion, Denmark will continue to call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with its international obligations. We also call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the path of diplomacy and dialogue and to do its part to foster lasting peace and stability through the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

**Mr. Dharmadhikari** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

On 6 January, North Korea launched an intermediate-range ballistic missile, which crashed off the coast of Japan. The North Korean authorities once again sought to highlight the missile's advanced features, including its hypersonic nature, which we read as a challenge to the resolutions adopted against North Korea. We assure Japan and the Republic of Korea of our solidarity in the face of this new provocation.

This launch is the latest of countless ballistic tests carried out by the North Korean regime in recent years, in flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions. We note that just two months ago, North Korea launched an intercontinental-range ballistic missile.

These illegal launches are accompanied by irresponsible nuclear rhetoric from the North Korean regime. In September 2023, North Korea amended its Constitution to include the possession of nuclear weapons, in yet another violation of Council resolutions.

The pursuit of North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes threatens regional stability. It flouts the authority of the Council, which has unanimously adopted resolutions to put an end to those programmes. It undermines the non-proliferation regime and, consequently, international peace and security.

In that context, we deplore Russia's endorsement of North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes and, in particular, the Russian Foreign Minister's comments that the denuclearization of North Korea is a closed issue. We can only reiterate our concern about the deepening of illicit military cooperation between North Korea and Russia. The deployment of North Korean troops in Russia represents an unacceptable escalation, and their participation in a war of aggression against a sovereign State is a flagrant violation of international law and the Charter of the United Nations. In return for supporting Russia in its war of aggression against Ukraine, North Korea is seeking impunity and assistance in developing its illegal military programmes.

It is therefore in the interest of all States to ensure compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and to bring North Korea to cease these destabilizing activities. France reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation of these resolutions.

In that respect, we will continue to actively support the work of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006). Despite Russia's veto of the renewal of its Panel of Experts, the Committee's role remains essential in overseeing the implementation of the resolutions and informing all Member States on their state of implementation.

We once again call on North Korea to comply with its international obligations, to abandon its illicit programmes of weapons of mass destruction and to opt for the path of dialogue, with a view to complete, irreversible and verifiable denuclearization.

**Mr. Hwang** (Republic of Korea): I too extend my gratitude to Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

The Republic of Korea condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in the strongest possible terms, for its 6 January launch of a so-called hypersonic intermediate-range ballistic missile. That launch, following over 50 ballistic missile launches last year alone, constitutes a clear threat to international peace and security. It is yet another flagrant violation of multiple Security Council resolutions, which explicitly state that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea shall not conduct any launches that use ballistic missile technology.

Following the launch, the State news agency of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — KCNA — highlighted Kim Jong Un's remarks that "the hypersonic missile system can deal a serious military strike and will reliably contain any rivals in the Pacific region". Along with the "toughest anti-United States counteraction" announced by Pyongyang just two weeks ago, as well as the redefinition of the Republic of Korea as a hostile State, declared one year earlier, these statements leave no room for doubt about North Korea's aggressive intentions.

The launch also exemplifies a deeply troubling trend. The KCNA report detailed the use of a "new composite carbon-fibre material" in the missile's engines, along with a "new comprehensive and effective method" for its flight and guidance systems. As stated even in Pyongyang's own report, this technology is "by no means easy to achieve" and "only a few countries in the world might possess such a weapon system".

Indeed, the world's most isolated and impoverished regime, under stringent Security Council sanctions, is gaining access to high-end dual-use technology and material as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea intensifies its illegal military cooperation with Russia.



Russia has been repeatedly violating multiple Security Council resolutions, whereas all other members of the Council reaffirmed their commitment to the full implementation of Council resolutions. We are now particularly alarmed by the absence of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea sanctions in the wake of Russia's dissolution of the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) and the possibility that Russia may even reverse its decades-long commitment to the denuclearization of North Korea. Russia, as a nuclear-weapon State and a permanent member of the Council, should clearly recognize that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the first case in the 55-year history of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime to severely abuse and undermine its core principles.

I would also like to draw the Council's attention to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's appalling treatment of its own people. Since North Korean troops joined the illegal war waged by Russia, they have suffered significant losses. Unfamiliar with modern warfare and employing outdated human-wave tactics, these soldiers were sitting ducks for drone attacks. My Government assesses that there are at least 1,100 casualties.

And then there is a report that the bereaved families of perished North Korean soldiers received nothing but death certificates and have been forced to remain silent. The North Korean authorities withheld details about where and how the soldiers died, saying only that they "died while participating in sacred combat". The grieving family members were then compelled to sign non-disclosure agreements. Those soldiers are essentially slaves to Kim Jong Un, brainwashed to sacrifice their lives on faraway battlefields to raise money for his regime and secure advanced military technology from Russia. That is why I repeatedly emphasize that we need to look simultaneously at both the nuclear and human rights issues of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the Security Council. The human rights situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains intrinsically linked to international peace and security.

The 6 January missile launch shows exactly where that blood money ends up. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea sacrifices its own people to fuel its nuclear ambitions and further contributes to death and destruction in Ukraine. It must stop now. The fallen soldiers are crying out from their graves.

The Council should speak with a united voice, take action to counter the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Russia's illicit activities and urge the full and effective implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions by all Member States. If the Council remains unable or unwilling to stop and hold the Democratic People's Republic of Korea accountable for persistently violating binding Security Council resolutions, egregiously abusing the NPT regime and relentlessly pursuing aggressive and dangerous military adventures, the international community will eventually face an even greater menace. Then, it will be too late for us to regret not having done what we ought to do now.

**Mrs. Blokar Drobič** (Slovenia): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

Let me make a couple of points on behalf of my delegation.

First, Slovenia strongly condemns the latest launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of what appears to have been an intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM). Without a doubt, that represents a blatant violation of multiple Security Council resolutions, a second one in a span of just two months. Such wilful and flagrant disrespect of Security Council resolutions is unacceptable. Let me reiterate that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must ensure implementation of the resolutions of this organ and abandon its illegal weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes.

Secondly, Slovenia is gravely concerned about the course that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has decided to take. In late 2023, North Korea took a series of escalatory steps, including military cooperation with third countries, ballistic missile tests and satellite launches. That continued throughout 2024. However, in addition to missile tests, there have been reports of the use of Democratic People's Republic of Korea-origin ballistic missiles in Ukraine, deeply concerning statements about the nuclear status of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and reports of the deployment of Democratic People's Republic of Korea troops to Europe.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has demonstrated numerous times that it does not care about cooperation with the international community or about its concerns. Instead, it continues to develop nuclear weapons and to test the capabilities for their delivery thousands of kilometres beyond its borders. With such reckless behaviour, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is threatening regional and global peace and security.

The Council's inaction in situations such as this fuels only further expansion of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's illegal nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes. North Korea needs to be denuclearized, and we believe the Council needs to find unity and employ all diplomatic means to make the Democratic People's Republic of Korea cease its provocations and bring it back to dialogue. That is the only legitimate option.

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

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has begun this year by again defying multiple Security Council resolutions. The United Kingdom strongly condemns the latest intermediate-range ballistic missile launch of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That latest launch follows a year of provocative and brazen violations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which saw the testing and firing of 50 missiles, including an intercontinental ballistic missile, as well as its craven support to Russia, supplying weapons and troops, for Russia's illegal war against Ukraine.

Those actions should concern us all. Our collective response is an important test for the Council's authority and our commitment to defending the Council's resolutions voted for in this Chamber. Yet we are unable to unite against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's continued flouting of the global non-proliferation architecture.

We should remain clear-eyed on the cost of the Security Council's silence. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to develop nuclear and ballistic capabilities, representing an unequivocal threat to peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and in the wider Indo-Pacific.

Russia's veto of the mandate renewal of the Panel of Experts of the Committee pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) (see S/PV.9591) has given the Democratic People's Republic of Korea a green light to commit such provocations unchecked.

And drawing false equivalence between the legitimate security concerns of Indo-Pacific nations and the illegal and provocative actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as some Council members have done in the past, is wrong and dangerous.

I want to make it clear that any nation's refusal to condemn decisively the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's actions represents direct complicity in furthering the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's illegal weapons programme.

We want to see a prosperous and stable Democratic People's Republic of Korea, whose people flourish in a secure neighbourhood. Therefore, I urge Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its missile programmes and destructive



partnership with Russia, which is already reported to have cost so many Democratic People's Republic of Korea lives and refocus on the well-being of the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to allow access for the international community, to accept repeated and unconditional offers for meaningful dialogue and to allow diplomacy to give the citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea a peaceful, stable and prosperous future.

**Mr. Sekeris** (Greece): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiari for his very interesting briefings.

The recent launch of an intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is indeed a particularly worrisome development, adding to the escalating rhetoric and security tensions in the region.

Against that background, Greece expresses its full solidarity with the Republic of Korea and Japan and wishes to highlight three points.

First, it is important to uphold the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as its cornerstone. That architecture is severely undermined by the recent launch of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which added to a long list of IRBMs, intercontinental ballistic missiles and other launches of military equipment. Those launches are in flagrant violation of multiple Security Council resolutions and of international law. Therefore, it is the collective duty of the members of the Security Council to condemn those tests, including the most recent one of 6 January.

Secondly, Greece urges those interested parties that have not yet met their obligations under the Council's resolutions, namely, resolution 1718 (2006) and subsequent resolutions, to expeditiously implement them and to work together for the achievement of our common goal of the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. To that end, we call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to de-escalate immediately and engage sincerely in dialogue with the Council and the United Nations system with a view to finding a diplomatic solution, as the only path to sustainable peace and security on the Peninsula.

Thirdly, we remain concerned by the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Various reports indicate that significant amounts are being spent on the improvement or deployment of sophisticated military equipment, instead of addressing basic needs of the people of the country. In that context, we invite the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to ease any restrictions on the delivery of humanitarian aid and to open its borders to international humanitarian personnel.

Before concluding, allow me to reiterate the genuine commitment of Greece to the implementation of the Security Council sanctions regime and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006). Unfortunately, the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the Committee has not been renewed; the sanctions nevertheless remain in place and must continue to be fully implemented by all Member States. Amid a challenging geopolitical landscape in the Asia-Pacific region, the unity of the Council on this matter is particularly crucial.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): At the outset, let me thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing this afternoon.

Pakistan notes with concern the escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula. The latest missile test is one manifestation of those tensions. Those developments are detrimental to regional and international peace and security. Pakistan supports the objective of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and the goals of global non-proliferation

and disarmament. Provocations such as missile tests, on the one hand, and coercive actions and threats, on the other, must be ended. Pakistan opposes any further nuclear weapons testing in Korea or elsewhere.

The challenges confronting the Korean Peninsula should be resolved through diplomatic engagement and dialogue. We strongly support the calls for the revival of talks among the relevant parties. It is incumbent on all parties to exercise restraint and not to escalate existing tensions or take any action that is detrimental to peace and security. To that end, consideration should be given by the Council to the adoption of some confidence-building measures by the parties in order to reduce tensions.

Pakistan remains committed to working within the framework established by United Nations resolutions to promote peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. We hope that the Security Council will find ways of reviving the dialogue and playing its due role in reducing tensions and threats to peace and security in the region.

**Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the participation in this meeting of the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We listened to the briefing delivered by Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Khiri. We regret the fact that, once again, we heard in it neither a comprehensive analysis of the situation on the Korean Peninsula nor constructive proposals to rectify it, nor balanced impartial assessments, as required by Article 100 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Time and again, by convening a meeting on each missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Western delegations reiterate the same old point, pinning full responsibility on Pyongyang while the military provocations undertaken by Washington, Seoul and Tokyo are obstinately overlooked. As in the past, those who initiated this meeting intend to create a negative information backdrop regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They are looking to keep obsolete sanctions measures afloat and to justify aggressive steps undertaken by the United States and allies in the region. Consider that the Security Council, with its unique mandate for the maintenance of peace and security, is being used not to develop sound political solutions; rather, it is being used as an instrument for propaganda and political score-settling. That is not what the founders of the United Nations would have wished to see, and that is not what the international community expects from the Security Council today.

Against that backdrop, the statements of certain members of the Security Council in this Chamber expressing their concern for the plight and the fate of the North Koreans and their desire to see a prosperous Democratic People's Republic of Korea with a happy population appear to be uniquely hypocritical. Those members are dreaming about muzzling the population, and they have been muzzling and asphyxiating it over the course of many years already. And against that backdrop, the leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has every right to implement measures to ensure their security and to uphold the sovereignty of the country. We note that, in the statement by the leader of the country, Kim Jong Un — whose birthday is today, incidentally, and we congratulate our North Korean friends on his birthday — following the launch of the hypersonic missile on 6 January, reference is made to the fact that the shoring up of military capabilities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is geared towards enhancing the self-defence of the country, not towards carrying out any offensive operations whatsoever.

The imminent departure from the White House of the Biden Administration is a good opportunity to consider the results of its four years of policy in the Korean Peninsula. The results will be unnerving. The conflict between the North and the South has reached staggering levels, including at the constitutional and institutional

levels. Dialogue at the highest level has been frozen, without any visible prospects for resumption. The Peninsula remains the target of large-scale militarization, with the use of United States nuclear capabilities. There is a bloc-based mindset that now prevails in the region, driving a deep wedge between neighbouring States. A stark manifestation of the aggressive policy undertaken by Pyongyang's adversaries recently has been the joint military exercises near the borders of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They have evolved from one-off joint manoeuvres in response to missile launches into regular large-scale operations with the involvement of aircraft carriers, destroyers, bombers and the latest generation fighter jets of three countries.

Regardless of what those — from Washington to Tokyo and Seoul — who are provoking instability in the region may state, one thing is clear: the Security Council resolutions on the Korean settlement stipulate that issues on the Peninsula need to be resolved exclusively through peaceful diplomatic and political means. That means that their practice of pumping weapons into the region and participating in the increased frequency of military manoeuvres is nothing other than a systematic violation of international law. Once again today, we have heard their mantra that, apparently, they are not provoking anything. But that is not true.

The fact is that planned policy will later be casually mentioned and acknowledged in an interview by a United States official. Just a few days ago, Antony Blinken, who compelled all parties to speak of the unprovoked nature of the Russian special military operation, announced that the United States had been pumping weapons into Ukraine long before its start. The statement of the outgoing United States Secretary of State on the transfer to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of Russian satellite and space technologies — made by him during a visit to Seoul on 6 January and repeated today by a number of delegations — is wholly unsubstantiated. Such statements are the latest example of baseless conjecture, which is geared towards smearing bilateral cooperation between the Russian Federation and the friendly nation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The strategic partnership treaty between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which was recently ratified by our country, includes article 4, whereby States undertake to support one another in the event of an armed attack against one of the parties. That provision is fully in line with the Charter of the United Nations. All measures that could be applied under that article are an internal matter pertinent exclusively to Russia-North Korea bilateral relations. Cooperation between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is designed to play a stabilizing role in the region on the basis of the principle of indivisible security, to reduce the risk of the Peninsula relapsing into war, including with the use of nuclear means, and to become one of the components of a robust security architecture in the region.

We regret that our long-standing friends and partners in Seoul are rapidly losing their independence under pressure from Washington. By embracing the path of blindly yielding to American interests, they are depriving themselves of opportunities to restore peace and trust in the region. In recent weeks, the situation in the Republic of Korea itself has become a factor of instability, which is liable to spark an armed confrontation. As has become clear from "leaks" in the media, the current leadership of the country deliberately sought to trigger a sharp escalation of tensions on the Peninsula in order to prop up their political positions within the country. To that end, they sent drones to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with the aim of provoking a harsh response from Pyongyang. If that is indeed the case, then Seoul's actions are a source of utmost concern.

In conclusion, we wish to note that, if those who initiated today's meeting genuinely want to end the dangerous stalemate rather than exacerbating it, they would be well-advised to fundamentally reconsider their approaches. The path to

normalization lies through forging mutually respectful dialogue, ensuring security guarantees and abandoning the logic of collective punishment through sanctions. The relevant proposals have been repeatedly set out in the Chamber by Russia and China. The United States continues to respond to such initiatives with a flat refusal. However, the West's failed policy on the Korean Peninsula attests to the fact that there are no real alternatives to those initiatives, and the sooner that understanding prevails at the Security Council, the sooner we will be able to positively influence developments in the region.

**Mr. Geng Shuang** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing and welcome the Permanent Representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Japan to the meeting today.

China has taken note of the recent launch and relevant statements by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the reactions of the relevant parties. The current complex and delicate situation on the Korean Peninsula and its highly unstable and uncertain future trajectory are a source of worry for the international community as a whole. Despite the different policies and propositions of the parties on the issue of the Korean Peninsula, maintaining peace and stability and preventing war and chaos there serve the interests of all and therefore should become the common goal.

Under the current circumstances, China once again calls on the parties concerned to focus on the greater good of the Peninsula and make joint efforts to maintain peace and stability on the Peninsula and advance political settlement to the issue.

First, the legitimate security concerns of the countries of the region should be taken seriously. As a vestige of the Cold War, the issue of the Korean Peninsula has dragged on for decades, with repeated ups and downs. It is essentially a security issue, with the crux being the long-standing absence of a peace mechanism to solve the security conundrum and realize a comprehensive and lasting solution to the issue. It is necessary to tackle both the symptoms and the root causes, transition from armistice to a peace mechanism, pay attention to the legitimate security concerns of all countries of the region and push for a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture. The dual-track approach and the principle of phased and synchronized steps proposed by China are an effective way to advance a political settlement and realize lasting peace and security on the Peninsula.

Secondly, the Cold War mentality and the practice of deterrence and exerting pressure should be abandoned. Recent years have seen spiralling confrontations on the Peninsula. The United States has incorporated the Peninsula into its Indo-Pacific strategy and has been bent on strengthening military alliances, increasing deterrence and pressure and provoking bloc confrontation. In particular, it has substantially increased its military presence on the Peninsula and the surrounding area and has gone so far as to introduce strategic assets, including intermediate-range missiles, into the region, gravely undermining the strategic and security interests of the countries of the region, including China. Certain approaches are counterproductive to resolving the issue and will instead only further intensify disputes and tensions in a total departure from the goal of maintaining peace and stability on the Peninsula and promoting a political solution. That is why China firmly opposes it.

Thirdly, persistent efforts should be made to promote dialogue, consultation and diplomatic negotiations. Since the 1990s, many glimmers of hope for a political solution to the issue of the Peninsula have emerged, only to be reversed and dashed by a certain country's policy swings. The relevant parties must draw lessons from history and make a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the current situation in the Peninsula and, based on that assessment, adopt a rational attitude, display mutual goodwill, take concrete action and show flexibility to work towards and create the conditions for dialogue, consultation and a political settlement.

In her statement just now, the representative of the United States distorted and smeared China, which we firmly oppose and will never accept. For years, China has adopted a prudent, responsible and constructive attitude, has always made judgments and enacted policies based on the merits of the issue itself and has always been committed to taking practical action to maintain peace and stability on the Peninsula and ease the situation there. China's sincerity, efforts and contribution allow no questioning, distortion or repudiation.

In conclusion, I would like to underscore that, in addressing this issue, the starting point and goal of the Security Council should be to advance the political settlement to the issue, rather than just to make accusations or exert pressure, and much less to allow itself to be reduced to a tool of a certain country for its political self-interest. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China has always conscientiously implemented all Democratic People's Republic of Korea-related resolutions and fulfilled its due international obligations. Meanwhile, as a close neighbour of the Peninsula and a responsible major country, China has always played a constructive role in its own way in promoting a political settlement, maintaining peace and stability on the Peninsula and achieving long-term peace and stability in Northeast Asia. We call on all parties concerned to work together with China to that end.

**Mr. George** (Sierra Leone): I thank 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, for his comprehensive briefing.

Sierra Leone condemns the reported latest weapons test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of a new hypersonic intermediate-range missile designed to strike remote targets in the Pacific, which to all intents and purposes is a bid to further expand their collection of nuclear-capable weapons to threaten regional and international security and stability. We are gravely concerned that the reported missile launched by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea flew more than 1,100 kilometres before landing in waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. The continuous and ever-evolving nature of the increasing military expansion by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a clear and blatant violation of Security Council resolutions, which is escalating tensions and instability on the Korean Peninsula.

We reiterate our call for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respect and fully comply with its obligations under the numerous Council resolutions that prohibit its continuous and increasingly alarming nuclear and ballistic weapons programme. We also reiterate our call for the strong and effective implementation of all the relevant Security Council resolutions that outline sanctions obligations, so as to deter further escalation and advancement of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons programme. Those resolutions are decisions of the Council, adopted to deter the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear proliferation programme, and the blatant violations thereof undermine the authority of this organ.

Sierra Leone reiterates its call for increased diplomatic efforts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula and to urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to negotiations to end its nuclear programmes in an unconditional and irreversible manner. We therefore call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage bilaterally and multilaterally with a view to unequivocally committing to transparent, complete, verifiable, irreversible and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.

We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the principles of disarmament, non-proliferation and international peace and security and call for concerted and concrete efforts to combat the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's proliferation actions, which, if not addressed comprehensively, might lead to unimaginable consequences of nuclear proportions.



**Mr. Alfaro de Alba** (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Panama wishes to thank the presidency of the Council for convening this meeting and Mr. Khaled Khiari, Assistant Secretary-General for the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, for his briefing.

The Republic of Panama reaffirms its commitment to international law and the principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, whose goal is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, and the Pact for the Future, adopted by the General Assembly on 22 September 2024 (General Assembly resolution 79/1), which renews the global commitment to international cooperation to protect the needs and interests of present and future generations.

It is nonetheless with profound concern that we see the world continuing to face increasingly frequent episodes of conflict and belligerence, in flagrant contradiction with those fundamental principles. As a nation committed to the promotion of peace and the peaceful resolution of disputes, Panama, in strict adherence to Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, expresses its alarm at the escalation of tensions on the Korean Peninsula. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's recent intermediate-range hypersonic ballistic missile test on 6 January, which deserves our condemnation, constitutes a clear violation of Security Council resolutions and is exacerbating an already volatile situation, marking a serious setback for regional and international stability.

The escalation in hostilities not only threatens international peace and security, but it also jeopardizes air and maritime traffic in the region — key factors elements in economic stability and global development. As stewards of one of the world's most strategic waterways and with one of the most extensive fleets registered of vessels, Panama plays an important role in ensuring maritime security. We have taken on the responsibility of promoting concrete action to ensure safe, reliable and efficient maritime traffic, while reaffirming our commitment to international cooperation to prevent risks and promote stability in trade routes.

History has taught us that a reluctance to curb patterns of provocation and hostility has entailed devastating conflicts, leading to fatal consequences for millions of people, the destruction of infrastructure and a proliferation of protracted humanitarian crises. We are now confronting a geopolitical landscape that reflects disturbing parallels with those mistakes of the past. Panama calls on the Council to put an end to those destructive dynamics and to prioritize the well-being and security of the most vulnerable populations, through judicious and coordinated action.

Recent reports from the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations point out that food insecurity remains a critical concern in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with Government restrictions limiting humanitarian assistance. The Council must act with sincerity and resolve to alleviate human suffering and ensure that the welfare of the people is the focus of all our action.

Panama calls on the parties to put an end to those destructive dynamics and to prioritize the well-being and security of the most vulnerable populations, through judicious and coordinated action. The situation on the Korean Peninsula not only constitutes a threat to regional stability, but it is also perpetuating the humanitarian crisis.

As a country that believes in cooperation and multilateralism, Panama reaffirms its willingness to work with all parties to find lasting solutions. We advocate an approach that eschews provocation and the use of force and that makes dialogue, mutual understanding and respect for international law a priority, in line with the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations.



**Ms. Persaud** (Guyana): I thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing and welcome the participation of the representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Japan in this meeting.

Guyana is deeply concerned that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to launch intermediate-range ballistic missiles in violation of resolutions of the Security Council. Those launches not only undermine the global non-proliferation regime but also further exacerbate tensions on the Korean Peninsula. Guyana condemns such violations and reiterates its call for all parties concerned to utilize the tools of diplomacy so that there can be progress in resolving the protracted tensions and in ensuring sustainable peace on the Peninsula. We urge the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and all other stakeholders to act in good faith to resuscitate dialogue, which remains critical for deriving a political solution to the issue.

Guyana reiterates its belief that the only way to prevent the use or the threat of the use of nuclear weapons is through their total elimination. We also reiterate our belief that the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is key to achieving that objective and is critical for the furtherance of international peace and security. We urge the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to abandon its ballistic missile programme, along with all other existing weapons of mass destruction, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

Guyana stresses that ending investment in the ballistic missile programme would free up resources for human development in the country. In that context, we urge the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to prioritize the well-being of its citizens and pursue a peaceful path to development that fully aligns with its obligations as a Member State of the United Nations. We also wish to emphasize the need for all relevant parties to exercise restraint and prioritize dialogue in addressing the mounting tensions and the security crisis on the Korean Peninsula.

Guyana once again stresses that the sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) must maintain its mandate of overseeing the implementation of the measures outlined in Council resolutions related to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, despite the expiration of the mandate of its Panel of Experts. We urge all Member States to comply with and fully implement the relevant Council resolutions related to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We also stress that a continuous flow of information on the implementation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea sanctions regime remains critical to the work of the 1718 Sanctions Committee in the execution of its mandate.

Guyana reaffirms its commitment to the Council's efforts to bring about full compliance with its resolutions related to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We also reaffirm our commitment to the advancement of the global non-proliferation and disarmament agenda and call on States that have not yet done so to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Finally, Guyana is also concerned about the dire humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We have taken note of the readiness of the United Nations humanitarian agency to address the needs of the vulnerable population in the country. In that regard, we encourage the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to allow the return of the United Nations country team and the international community to the country.

**Mr. Yusuf** (Somalia): I join others in thanking Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing. I also acknowledge the presence of the representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Japan at this meeting.

We convene at a moment that demands our collective attention and wisdom. We acknowledge the concerns expressed regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's continued advancement of its weapons programme, particularly in the light of recent development and declarations. The situation is sensitive and poses a risk of further escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

The global non-proliferation architecture, built upon the foundations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, remains our strongest framework for preventing nuclear proliferation. We must acknowledge that, since the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 2003, the path forward has become more challenging. Yet those instruments remain vital for international peace and security.

We cannot overlook the fact that every missile test violates the relevant Security Council resolutions. The implementation of those resolutions can be a path to dialogue and stability. However, we must implement them in a manner that minimizes unintended consequences.

The current sanctions regime against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has had an impact on the civilian economy, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable members of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's population. Our approach should balance security imperatives with humanitarian considerations. We appreciate the ongoing efforts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) to process humanitarian exemptions and facilitate the delivery of essential assistance to those in need.

The path forward requires a dual-track approach. While maintaining the integrity of the international non-proliferation regime, we must also create conditions conducive to diplomatic engagement and ensure trust-building measures between relevant parties. The tensions and uncertainties on the Peninsula could intensify without meaningful dialogue, making it crucial to find common ground. An all-or-nothing approach is unlikely to yield sustainable results.

In conclusion, we firmly believe that reducing tensions is not merely an option — it is an imperative. We encourage all parties to renew their commitment to seek a solution on the basis of constructive dialogue and avoid unnecessary escalations that could have disastrous consequences. We must remember, as Council members, that the Charter gives us the primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security. That principle should guide our decisions over and above any other consideration. Somalia remains committed to finding a peaceful resolution that creates conditions for lasting stability and prosperity for all people on the Korean Peninsula.

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

I would like first to express our sincere appreciation to Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his comprehensive briefing. I welcome the participation of the Permanent Representatives of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Japan at this meeting.

The launch of a new intermediate-range hypersonic ballistic missile this month, following the October intercontinental ballistic missile launch, reflects the increasingly complex dynamics on the Korean Peninsula. This latest missile test, reportedly utilizing new technologies and capabilities, has heightened international concerns.

While such developments affect regional stability and the non-proliferation framework, we must examine the broader context, namely, the continued militarization of the region through large-scale exercises, strategic deployments and

the enhancement of military capabilities by various parties. This pattern of escalation serves no one's interests and risks dragging the region towards an uncontrollable spiral of tension.

Three fundamental principles must guide any endeavour towards peace.

First, military escalation cannot deliver the solution we seek.

Secondly, sanctions alone cannot build sustainable peace.

Thirdly, dialogue remains the only credible path forward.

The current reality is deeply concerning — military tensions are rising, humanitarian needs are becoming more acute, diplomatic channels remain underutilized and civilian populations bear the consequences.

This situation demands the following immediate practical steps.

First, all parties must work together to reduce tensions and scale back military activities in the region.

Secondly, diplomatic contacts should resume without preconditions.

Thirdly, humanitarian channels must be strengthened and protected.

Fourthly, confidence-building measures should be implemented.

Fifthly, inclusive regional dialogue mechanisms must be established.

We recognize that lasting peace cannot be achieved through punitive measures alone. Our shared objective remains the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. However, that goal must be pursued through peaceful means, with dialogue as the essential tool.

We call on all parties to avoid further escalation, to choose dialogue over confrontation, to prioritize diplomacy over demonstrations of force and to place the interests of people above all other considerations.

In conclusion, the path forward, although difficult, is clear. It requires the courage to choose dialogue in the face of mounting tensions, patience when progress seems distant and commitment when obstacles appear insurmountable. That is the only route to lasting peace. The choice remains ours — either peace through dialogue or continued escalation. Tension is not inevitable, and peace is not beyond our reach on the Korean Peninsula.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The representative of the United States has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

**Ms. Shea** (United States of America): There were some false assertions about the United States and the military exercises in which we participate on the Korean Peninsula. I am therefore compelled to respond.

The joint military exercises of the United States and the Republic of Korea are long-standing, purely defensive in nature and intended to maintain force readiness and preserve regional security. The United States is committed to the security of the Republic of Korea and our alliance's combined defence posture. The United States supports efforts to manage and reduce military tensions on the Korean Peninsula and across the globe through consistent and effective military coordination with our partners and allies, with transparency on the defensive measures that we are taking and also with appropriate risk-reduction measures.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Kim Song** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The right to self-defence is the fundamental cornerstone guaranteeing the existence and development of the State and the main core of national sovereignty. It is exactly for that reason that the Charter of the United Nations and other international laws stipulate that all States Members of the United Nations have an equal right to self-defence, regardless of the size of territory and population or of the level of development. I strongly denounce and categorically reject yet another instance of the unfair and abnormal practice of the Security Council's unjust handling of the legitimate and just exercise of the sovereign right of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, at the brigandish request of the United States and its follower forces.

As stated earlier, the test firing of the new-type intermediate-range hypersonic ballistic missile is part of the plan for the development of national defence capabilities to enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of the strategic deterrent, in conformity with the changing security environment in the region. As such, it does not have the slightest negative impact on the security of the neighbouring countries. Even today, with the civilian death toll exceeding 45,000 in Gaza, the United States characterizes Israel's nefarious mass killing atrocities as the right to self-defence, arousing public indignation on the part of the international community. Meanwhile, it takes issue with the legitimate exercise of the right to self-defence by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United States itself is the extreme manifestation of double standards and a mockery and disregard of the Charter

The anti-Democratic People's Republic of Korea military confrontation moves of the United States and its follower forces in and around the Korean Peninsula have now reached their limits, unprecedented in their reckless, provocative and dangerous nature. As the United States-Republic of Korea alliance has currently evolved into a nuclear-based military bloc and a nuclear war alliance, the nuclear blackmail and threat against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have been actualized and maximized as never before. In addition, the United States brings in even NATO member States to conduct large-scale joint military exercises of various kinds and types around the Korean Peninsula. As a result, the United States-led military threat is escalating to a global scale, covering Europe and the Asia-Pacific region, and its main spearhead is turning exactly to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The development, testing, manufacture and possession of the weapons system required by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to highly advance national war deterrence constitute the just exercise of the inalienable right to self-defence inherent to a sovereign State, in the face of the prevailing changing security environment in the Korean Peninsula and of potential threats. That exercise is the absolute guarantee for safeguarding the peace and stability of the region.

Time and again, the Security Council, whose primary mission is to maintain peace and security in the world, singles out the just exercise of the sovereign right of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, while remaining silent about the heinous military moves of the United States and its follower countries, which disturb the peace and stability of the region. We take this opportunity to caution against that in strongest terms.

Should a grave situation of physical conflict that no one desires be brought about in the Korean Peninsula as a result of the reckless war mania kicked up by the United States and the Republic of Korea, the Security Council should be held accountable for criminalizing the just exercise of the sovereign right of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by applying extreme prejudice and double standards and for giving impunity to the war provocation manoeuvres of the United States and the Republic of Korea.

Today the United Nations arena, a platform of impartiality and equality, has instead become a vehicle for anti-Democratic People's Republic of Korea confrontation by the United States and a handful of hostile forces. That worrisome reality brings home to us the immutable truth that we have no right to step back — not even an inch — from the justice we have chosen in order to defend our sovereignty and the right to existence and development.

Comrade Kim Jong Un, President of State Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, said that the effort to possess strong military capability should be a natural, self-defensive and mandatory right and core State policy that a sovereign State should not fail to pursue in both peaceful and confrontational environment. The destruction of the balance of power between friend and foe immediately means war. Peace, ensured by strong power, can be genuine and durable. It is a lesson learned and a truth verified by history and reality. Peace is not defended in words.

The Security Council is not the sole stage of the United States. If the United States and its following forces continue to abuse the Security Council as a tool for realizing their unlawful political goals, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will safeguard its sovereign rights and interests with a more resolute and decisive response. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will, in future too, continue to exercise the sovereign rights of the State and reliably safeguard regional and global peace and security as a responsible nuclear-weapon State.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

**Mr. Yamazaki (Japan):** I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this critical meeting, jointly called for by like-minded Security Council members and at our request, and for giving us this opportunity to make remarks on this important agenda. It has been only nine days since I delivered my last statement as a Council member (see S/PV.9829). As I promised back then, Japan will continue to contribute to the Security Council's deliberations in whatever capacity. I also thank Assistant Secretary-General Khiari for his briefing.

I must begin by strongly condemning another launch of a solid-fuel-propelled intermediate-range ballistic missile by North Korea in violation of multiple Security Council resolutions. This is not merely a regional issue, but it is fundamentally related to global non-proliferation, about which we should all be united. The Security Council used to be united and able to speak with one voice, unanimously adopting 11 resolutions since 2006, which, among other things, require all Member States to prevent missile and missile-related items and technology from being transferred to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It was the Council that acted under its special responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council, however, is no longer unified on this file.

In May 2022, draft resolution S/2022/431, which would have condemned an intercontinental ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, was vetoed (see S/PV.9048). Since then, the Council has failed to show its resolute stance against the repeated provocations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, not to mention that the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) was forced to terminate its mandate owing to the veto by Russia, with its clear intention to veil its unlawful military cooperation with North Korea (see S/PV.9591). It is a regrettable and totally unacceptable situation, where the Security Council has been paralysed in addressing that grave threat to international peace and security.

Let me take this opportunity to stress our concern about the relevance of the Security Council. So far, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has launched more than 100 ballistic missiles. Russia is continuously attacking Ukraine by using weapons supplied by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and by engaging

troops from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in combat against Ukraine. All those acts represent a reckless disregard for the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the decisions taken by the Security Council, and Russia, which should be a responsible permanent member of the Council, does not hesitate to breach the resolutions to which Russia itself agreed.

That situation should not be a new normal, and no excuse can justify those violations. We have been hearing arguments for the easing or lifting of sanctions, but violators of the resolutions should not be rewarded in such a way. We do not see any rationale or justification for North Korea to need to equip itself with ballistic missiles, including intercontinental ballistic missiles, developing nuclear weapons and dispatching its troops more 10,000 kilometres across the Eurasian continent to engage in war out of self-defence. Our silence would only send the wrong message — not just to Pyongyang, but to the entire world, including potential proliferators. The international community should be aware of the systemic danger of that irresponsible approach of loosening up the sanctions.

Japan stepped down from the Security Council just about a week ago, but it is still our strong hope that the Council will take action in response to this unprecedented phenomenon and challenge to the legitimacy and the relevance of the Council. Japan will spare no effort to support and engage in the work of the Council, as we believe that the Council is at the forefront of protecting the global non-proliferation regime. Not a single Member State should despair and refrain from raising its voice in the face of this serious challenge to the values and the order of the United Nations system, whose eightieth anniversary we commemorate this year.

Let me also point out that North Korea has continued to build up its military capability, including nuclear and ballistic missile development, at the sacrifice of the welfare of the people in North Korea. The severe humanitarian situation in North Korea is not derived from the sanctions but rather from the country's reckless military expenditure, reportedly amounting to more than 25 per cent of its gross domestic product.

I would like to conclude by once again strongly urging the Democratic People's Republic of Korea not to conduct further launches and to immediately and fully comply with all relevant Security Council resolutions, engage in diplomacy and accept the repeated offers of dialogue.

*The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.*