



Security Council

Seventy-second year

8137th meeting

Friday, 15 December 2017, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Kono (Japan)

Members:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
China	Mr. Wu Haitao
Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
France	Mr. Delattre
Italy	Mr. Cardi
Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
Senegal	Mr. Seck
Sweden	Ms. Wallström
Ukraine	Mr. Klimkin
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Field
United States of America	Mr. Tillerson
Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli Frieri

Agenda

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Letter dated 1 December 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2017/1038)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Letter dated 1 December 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2017/1038)

The President: I wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General, the Ministers and the other distinguished representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence underscores the importance of the subject matter we will discuss today.

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 of the Republic of Korea to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Cho Hyun, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea.

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

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/1038, which contains the text of a letter dated 1 December 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres.

The Secretary-General: Allow me to first thank the Japanese presidency, and to thank you personally, Mr. President, for convening this meeting. I would also like to acknowledge and welcome the many Ministers and other representatives around the table, as well as the participation of the Republic of Korea and of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in this important meeting.

The situation on the Korean peninsula is the most tense and dangerous peace and security issue in the world today. I am deeply concerned by the

risk of military confrontation, including as a result of unintended escalation or miscalculation. I know that the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Security Council earlier this week on his recent visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I will not repeat what he had to say, but I want to note that his visit involved the first in-depth political exchange of views between the Secretariat and officials in Pyongyang in almost eight years. Indeed, his visit came at the end of a difficult year.

This year, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted activities related to its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes at an alarming and accelerated pace. On 3 September, it conducted its sixth nuclear-explosive test, involving what it claimed was a "two-stage thermo-nuclear weapon". The test caused a seismic event of magnitude 6.1. Over the year, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has conducted 20 ballistic missile launches. Those have included its first tests of two intercontinental-range ballistic missiles and tests of new medium- and intermediate-range ballistic missiles. In September, two Hwasong-12 intermediate-range ballistic missiles overflew Japan. No aviation or maritime safety notifications were given for any of those launches.

The International Atomic Energy Agency remains unable to access the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to verify the status of its nuclear programme. The Agency monitors developments through satellite imagery; at the Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Centre, it has observed signatures consistent with the operation of a plutonium production reactor and reported centrifuge enrichment facility. The Agency also continues to observe indications of ongoing mining, milling and concentration activities at the Pyongsan uranium mine and Pyongsan uranium concentration plant.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains the only country to continue to break the norm against nuclear testing. Its actions show blatant disregard for the will and resolutions of the Security Council, and undermine the international norm against nuclear testing and the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Resolution 2375 (2017), adopted in September, includes the strongest sanctions ever imposed on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I reiterate my call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's leadership to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions and allow space for the resumption

of dialogue on denuclearization and sustainable peace on the Korean peninsula.

While all concerned seek to avoid an accidental escalation leading to conflict, the risk is being multiplied by misplaced overconfidence, dangerous narratives and rhetoric and the lack of communication channels. It is time to re-establish and strengthen communication channels, including inter-Korean and military-to-military channels. That is critical to lower the risk of miscalculation or misunderstanding and reduce tensions in the region. Any military action could have devastating and unpredictable consequences.

The unity of the Security Council is an essential instrument to achieving the goal of denuclearization, and creates the space for diplomatic initiatives aimed at achieving it in a peaceful manner. The Security Council's call in paragraph 30 of resolution 2375 (2017) is united to "further work to reduce tensions so as to advance the prospects for a comprehensive settlement". It also expresses

"its desire for a peaceful and diplomatic solution to the situation ... and [welcomes] efforts by Council members as well as other Member States to facilitate a peaceful and comprehensive solution through dialogue" (*resolution 2375 (2017), eighth preambular paragraph*).

The Secretariat and I are the Council's partner in that effort, and my good offices will always remain available. I believe that the Secretariat adds strategic value in three key areas: first, impartiality; secondly, the voice and norms, values and principles for peaceful and diplomatic solutions, in line with international law; and, thirdly, offering channels of communication with all parties. The Organization is a key venue where all six parties are represented and can interact to narrow differences in understanding and promote confidence-building measures. As Secretary-General, I commit to protecting and strengthening those three areas. Security Council unity behind that effort is essential.

I welcome the Council's humanitarian and human rights concerns. The Secretariat has consistently conveyed the importance of disassociating the peace and security situation from the humanitarian imperative. Seventy per cent of the population of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is categorized as food insecure, and 40 per cent are malnourished. The 2017 *Democratic People's Republic of Korea*

Humanitarian Needs and Priorities document calls for \$114 million to meet urgent requirements, which is only 30 per cent funded. I ask all Member States, particularly those around this table, to carefully consider the humanitarian principles that underpin our work. The people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea need our generosity and help.

Not long from now, athletes will gather in Pyeongchang for the Winter Olympics. I express my sincerest hope that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will take part. As the General Assembly has recognized, the Olympic Games can foster an atmosphere of peace, development, tolerance and understanding on the Korean peninsula and beyond. We need to spread and deepen that spirit of hope and possibility. Diplomatic engagement is the only pathway to sustainable peace and denuclearization. We must do everything we can to reach that objective and avoid a level of danger that would be unpredictable in its trajectory and catastrophic in its consequences.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

As we have all witnessed, North Korea has been escalating its outrageous acts of provocation, in flagrant violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. Over the past two years, North Korea has launched 40 ballistic missiles, and two of those missiles flew over Japan. They have also conducted three nuclear tests. North Korea purported the one in September to be a hydrogen bomb test; the test's scale was far larger than those previous. Their defiance of the authority of the Council is totally unacceptable.

Most recently, on 29 November, North Korea launched a ballistic missile with the range of an intercontinental ballistic missile, which appears to be a new type of missile. It demonstrated, once again, that North Korea poses a clear global threat to all Member States. The advancement of its nuclear programme represents a fundamental threat to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The most recent launch was conducted 75 days after North Korea's provocations in September. Some optimistically viewed those 75 days of silence as a positive signal. However, the missile launch in November made it clear that North Korea had been continuing its relentless development of its nuclear and missile programmes while seeming

to be silent. It is increasingly evident that it is nowhere near ready to abandon them, nor is it interested in returning to meaningful dialogue.

The visit of Under-Secretary-General Feltman has simply reconfirmed the dire reality of the situation. The international community should be increasingly alarmed by the fact that North Korea is continuing its nuclear and missile development even as we are holding today's meeting. North Korea claims that its programmes are for its own security, including the maintenance of its regime. On the contrary, however, they are extremely dangerous. They run counter to the international order and could affect the safety of any other State Member of the United Nations. In that connection, I would like to point out that Japan has never attempted to achieve regime change in other countries or regions by force. We believe that a peaceful solution is desirable. However, North Korea has consistently rejected the possibility of such a solution and instead has continued to escalate its acts of provocation. It ignores the so-called Agreed Framework, of 1994, and the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks, betraying the good faith of all the countries concerned. North Korea has used those talks as a pretext for continuing its nuclear and missile development.

How has North Korea rewarded our efforts to achieve dialogue and provide assistance over the past two decades? It has employed brinkmanship and tried to win concessions. It is our responsibility not to repeat past mistakes such as engaging in dialogue for the sake of dialogue. That has done nothing but enable North Korea to continue to stall for time for its nuclear and missile development. The relevant Security Council resolutions have already clearly stipulated that North Korea must abandon its programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and we should not retreat from that goal. Commitment and concrete action towards denuclearization on the part of North Korea are prerequisites for meaningful dialogue.

The international community must seek greater unity and cooperate closely in order to put maximum pressure on North Korea through every available means. That is the only way we can make North Korea change its policy. The United Nations sanctions are an effective way to achieve that goal. In that regard, the Council should also recall the determination it has expressed in its resolutions to take further significant measures in the event of further nuclear tests or launches by North Korea. Sanctions are the tools that can make North

Korea understand that the only path is to change its policies. The measures that the Security Council has adopted are unprecedentedly strong and very close to a full-fledged sanctions regime. Sanctions are most effective when they are fully implemented and put robust pressure on North Korea to curb its nuclear and missile programmes by drastically reducing its foreign currency earnings. We therefore strongly urge all States Members of the United Nations to fully implement such sanctions and close all potential loopholes. In that regard, Japan is ready to assist countries experiencing difficulties in implementing sanctions measures.

In addition, we welcome the more autonomous measures targeting North Korea that are being introduced or reinforced in many countries and call on all Member States to take further additional measures to stop the movement of persons, goods and funds to North Korea, including by severing diplomatic ties. Japan has been implementing its own strict measures. I would like to inform the Council today that we have just introduced additional autonomous measures, designating 19 North Korean entities for an assets freeze. I call on other States to adopt similar measures.

Regrettably, the threat posed by North Korea also includes its capacity to produce other weapons of mass destruction, such as biological and chemical weapons, as well as its activities in cyberspace. North Korea may reportedly be acquiring funds to further develop its nuclear and missile programmes by selling weapons or through cybertheft. We should strengthen our international information-sharing and cooperation network so that we can better cope with all possible threats.

Even as we speak, nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles are being steadily developed at the expense of the welfare of the North Korean people. We cannot overlook the reports of grave violations of their human rights. Some years ago, North Korean agents infiltrated Japan and abducted a number of Japanese citizens, including a girl as young as 13 years old. Only five of the abductees have returned, while many of the Japanese who were abducted have remained in custody in North Korea. This week the mother of one of the abductees passed away, having not seen her beloved daughter for nearly 40 years. Another family member also passed away recently. The families cannot wait forever. It is deeply regrettable that only a few of the abductees have been able to return home to their waiting families and friends. We must underscore our serious concerns

about the human rights violations and abuses that North Korea has committed, including those against citizens of other countries both within and outside the territory of North Korea, as happened in the case of the United States citizen Otto Warmbier. The only way to achieve the core United Nations goal of maintaining international peace and security — including in North Korea itself — is through a comprehensive settlement of these abduction, nuclear and missile issues.

North Korea may be able to dramatically boost its economy and improve the welfare of its people if it chooses the right path. But it will be able to enjoy a bright future only by resolving its nuclear and missile issues and cases of abduction. Since it has yet to fulfil its commitment to denuclearization and take concrete actions to that end, let us send a clear and unified message that the international community will never accept a nuclear-armed North Korea.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now invite the Secretary of State of the United States of America to take the floor.

Mr. Tillerson (United States of America): I am grateful for the opportunity to speak to the Security Council today. On behalf of the United States, I thank Japan and Foreign Minister Kono for convening today's ministerial meeting on the growing threat from North Korea.

Upon taking office, President Trump identified North Korea as the greatest national security threat to the United States. That judgment remains the same today. After its intercontinental ballistic-missile launch on 29 November, the North Korean Government claimed that it now possesses the capability to strike any location in the continental United States. North Korea's growing capabilities reflect a direct threat to our security and the security of the entire world. We do not regard this claim as an empty threat. The North Korean regime's continuing unlawful missile launches and testing activities signal its contempt for the United States, its neighbours in Asia and all Members of the United Nations. In the face of such a threat, inaction is unacceptable for any nation.

Through a series of robust Security Council resolutions, this organ has taken a leading role in condemning North Korea's unlawful nuclear and missile programmes and imposing consequences.

The international community remains firm in its determination that it will not accept a nuclear North Korea. Each United Nations State Member must fully implement all existing Security Council resolutions. For those nations that have not yet done so, or that have been slow to enforce Security Council resolutions, their hesitation calls into question whether their vote is a commitment to words only but not actions. For countries that have not taken action, I urge them to consider their interests, their allegiances and their values in the face of this grave and global threat.

We believe that more can and must be done beyond enforcing the minimum requirements of the Security Council resolutions directed at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Last spring, the United States initiated a peaceful pressure campaign of economic and diplomatic sanctions against North Korea, with the intent of setting conditions for North Korea to engage in serious negotiations for the complete, verifiable and irreversible abandonment of its nuclear-weapon programmes. Our resolve to continue that campaign is even greater today. Over the past, year many allies and partners of the United States have joined our campaign, going beyond mere compliance with the Security Council resolutions. We ask those nations to continue to increase pressure through unilateral action. Doing so will further isolate North Korea politically and economically, cutting off support and funds for its unlawful nuclear and missile programmes.

We particularly call on Russia and China to increase pressure, including going beyond the full implementation of the Security Council resolutions. Continuing to allow North Korean labourers to toil in slave-like conditions inside Russia in exchange for wages used to fund nuclear-weapon programmes calls into question Russia's dedication as a partner for peace. Similarly, as Chinese crude oil flows to North Korean refineries, the United States questions China's commitment to solving an issue that has serious implications for the security of its own citizens. Recently, the North Korean regime has sought to portray United Nations sanctions as harmful to women and children. But this is a regime that hypocritically spends billions on nuclear and ballistic missile programmes while its own people suffer great poverty. The regime could feed and care for women, children and ordinary people in North Korea if it were to choose the welfare of its people over weapons development.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has a choice: it can reverse course, give up its unlawful nuclear-weapon programme and join the community of nations, or it can continue to condemn its people to poverty and isolation. The regime in Pyongyang bears the ultimate responsibility for the well-being of its people. North Korea claims to undertake its nuclear-weapon programme as an essential step for the survival of its regime. In making that choice, North Korea has made itself less secure, and its economy has become further isolated and disconnected from the global economy.

We have been clear that all options remain on the table in the defence of our nation, but we do not seek, nor do we want, war with North Korea. The United States will use all necessary measures to defend itself against North Korean aggression, but our hope remains that diplomacy will produce a resolution.

As I said earlier this week, a sustained cessation of North Korea's threatening behaviour must occur before talks can begin. North Korea must earn its way back to the table. The pressure campaign must and will continue until denuclearization is achieved. We will, in the meantime, keep our channels of communication open. Our message today is one that this body has heard before and one that we will continue to repeat: the United States will not allow the regime in Pyongyang to hold the world hostage. We will continue to hold North Korea accountable for its reckless and threatening behaviour today and in future. We ask every nation here to join us in exerting sovereignty to protect all of our people. We also ask all to join a unified effort to achieve a complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

The President: I now invite the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden to take the floor.

Ms. Wallström (Sweden): The situation on the Korean peninsula is the greatest threat to international peace and security facing the world today. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programme illustrates, as we have already heard, a blatant disregard for its international obligations. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has repeatedly violated international law, including numerous Security Council resolutions. Its actions are also contrary to the existing global norm against nuclear testing, as embodied in the

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and global non-proliferation norms.

The Council has repeatedly — I believe this is the sixteenth meeting — been called together this year to address the illegal testing of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. At each meeting, Council members have unanimously condemned those provocations in the strongest terms. The world does not accept the nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and it is essential that we continue to stand united.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's important meeting. I particularly welcome the presence of the representatives of the Republic of Korea and of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea here today. Let this meeting be a step towards dialogue.

I want to take this opportunity to convey directly to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea the following five messages. First, cease all provocations; secondly, engage in a credible and meaningful dialogue; thirdly, abide by the Security Council's resolutions and fulfil international obligations; fourthly, abandon the nuclear weapon and missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner; and, fifthly, return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

The adoption of resolution 2375 (2017) toughened the targeted sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and it now constitutes the most rigorous sanctions regime ever enforced under the United Nations system. For the sanctions to have the desired effect, it is critical that we urgently ensure their universal and comprehensive implementation. To that end, we need additional capacity at all levels, including improved monitoring and targeted capacity-building. We are actively engaged, through the European Union, in support of such efforts.

This week, the Council has held discussions on both the acute human rights situation and the precarious humanitarian conditions in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The humanitarian situation for ordinary North Koreans remains of serious concern. The responsibility for the well-being of the North Korean people falls, without a doubt, on the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of

Korea. At the same time, it is of the utmost importance that the humanitarian exemptions provided for under the sanctions regime be upheld. Reports that international humanitarian organizations' ability to provide assistance has been reduced, therefore, need to be addressed. As the Secretary-General has pointed out, there is also an urgent need for more funding towards life-saving humanitarian assistance in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Over the past year, tensions on the Korean peninsula have continued to rise. They have now reached a very dangerous level. I think we all want to instil a sense of urgency on this matter. Provocations have been accompanied by an increase in confrontational rhetoric. In that environment, the potential for mistakes, misunderstandings and miscalculations is high.

In parallel to effectively implementing the sanctions regime, we must undertake further work to reduce tensions in order to advance the prospects for a comprehensive settlement. Sanctions alone will not resolve the current situation. Intensified and creative diplomatic efforts that pave the way for a peaceful, diplomatic and political solution are urgently needed. The situation must be approached without prejudice, and we must be prepared to consider both new and previous proposals and agreements. In that regard, there is also need to explore the possibilities for regional security cooperation and arrangements. Sweden is contributing to those diplomatic efforts, and we welcome Under-Secretary-General Feltman's recent visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The Council has the responsibility to uphold peace and security. All over the world, people have their eyes on what happens here, and they fear what could be the result of a further escalation of the crisis on the Korean peninsula. We have to exhaust every avenue for diplomacy and dialogue. Efforts are urgent, and the consequences of failure would be disastrous.

The President: I now invite the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine to take the floor.

Mr. Klimkin (Ukraine): I thank the Japanese presidency and you personally, Minister Kono, for convening today's briefing. Of course, I also thank the Secretary-General for his very useful update.

The ongoing development of North Korea's nuclear and missile programme continues to undermine the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Recent developments prove that Pyongyang is arrogantly defiant in ignoring international law and the repeated calls to halt its illegal activity.

Unprecedented provocative actions by North Korea in the past two years were met by the most robust sanctions regime in history. Resolution 2375 (2017), adopted unanimously in response to the sixth and most powerful nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, sent a very clear signal to Pyongyang. In particular, it urged Pyongyang not to conduct any further missile launches or nuclear tests and to refrain from any other provocations. At the same time, the Security Council indicated the way out of the crisis, including by reaffirming its commitment to a peaceful, diplomatic and political solution to the situation, while also confirming the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's sovereignty and stressing the need for further work to reduce tensions in order to advance the prospects for a comprehensive settlement.

What was the response to that resolution? Another missile test. Despite all of the political and diplomatic efforts to curb Pyongyang's aggressive ambitions, North Korea moved closer to having a fully functional nuclear arsenal. The increasing militarization has already severely affected the livelihoods of its people, who continue to live under constant duress as they experience chronic shortages of even basic goods and services. Besides diverting resources from acute human needs to finance its missile and nuclear programme, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to effectively evade sanctions.

Recent developments, in particular the intercontinental ballistic missile launch last month, suggest that Pyongyang is not interested in the resumption of negotiations. We are of the view shared by many around this table that only the full implementation of the Security Council resolutions can bring us closer to changing that trend. Before that happens, the Council must stand ready to introduce additional measures in case of new provocations. The long-standing crisis on the Korean peninsula has global implications, and therefore raises a question as to what should be done by the international community to prevent the emergence of a nuclear threat in future in other parts of the globe as well. In my view, the case of North Korea includes two important basic lessons for the international community.

First, it demonstrates what can happen when weapons of mass destruction are obtained by

irresponsible actors. Today Pyongyang blackmails the entire region — in fact, the entire world — by threatening to use its nuclear and missile capabilities, without any thought of possible consequences and repercussions. We therefore continue to witness emerging and further evolving challenges to the non-proliferation regime. Unfortunately, it is becoming harder for the Council to respond in unity. More often, we witness a policy of unwillingness on the part of some countries to recognize that the North Korean regime represents a fundamental threat. Those who are looking for excuses for Pyongyang should realize that for people in Japan, the Republic of Korea and other countries alerts with regard to North Korean missiles have become a fact of life. Just imagine how it feels to be jolted awake by the wail of sirens piercing the early-morning calm.

Secondly, the appeasement of aggressive ambitions never works. Furthermore, perpetrators are only encouraged by concessions and inaction by the international community. We saw that previously in Europe in the 1930s, and see it today too in Europe and elsewhere. Therefore, the international community should demonstrate a clear and uncompromising stance — and I would like to emphasize “uncompromising” — in defending international law, wherever or by whomever it is breached. That stance should not be limited to declarations on the ultimate necessity to defend human rights, peace and security. We need actions and prompt and adequate responses.

In recent decades, we have witnessed the emergence of a number of volatile hotspots in different parts of the world. We have also seen a nuclear-weapon State successfully testing a technology, creating long-lasting destabilization and carrying out aggression against its neighbours — sovereign States. Unfortunately, my country has been affected too.

Earlier this month we marked the twenty-third anniversary of the signing of the Budapest Memorandum on security assurances in connection with Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In return to the voluntary renunciation by Ukraine of its nuclear arsenal, three nuclear States committed to respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine. The signatories of the Memorandum furthermore obligated themselves to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons would ever be used against Ukraine.

Let me remind the Council that the provision of security guarantees to Ukraine by nuclear States was a precondition for my country's accession to the NPT. Let me also stress that the Memorandum is deposited with the Secretariat, in accordance with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations, and was certified by the Secretary-General as an international agreement. However, the obligations set forth in that document were insidiously violated by Russia — one of the signatories and the recipient of the nuclear weapons based in Ukraine until 1994. As a result, my country had its borders fundamentally violated in a blatant show of disregard for the norms and principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and a number of other agreements, including the Budapest Memorandum.

The illegal occupation of Crimea and the ongoing Russian aggression in the Donbas region of Ukraine have left the low-enriched uranium research reactor in Sevastopol, two nuclear repositories and more than 1,200 radionuclide sources without due control of the Ukrainian national regulator. I wish to recall the legal framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards application in Ukraine, including in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. And when we talk about the importance of preserving and strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime, we should also keep in mind that the continuing occupation of the territory of Ukraine by a nuclear-weapon State has resulted in the de-facto expansion of the geographical area of nuclear-weapon deployment.

Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, along with its client North Korea's systematic provocations, has provoked a dangerously unbalanced situation in the international security system, undermining the effectiveness and reliability of the non-proliferation regime. If we are to prevent the world from sliding into a state of lawlessness, we must stand united in order to ensure respect for international law and accountability for violations of that law, regardless of whether it is violated by a recognized nuclear-weapon State or by those that, regrettably, desperately wish to gain such status. That is not going to happen.

Mr. Field (United Kingdom): I would like to thank Foreign Minister Kono for bringing us together in today's important meeting under Japan's presidency of the Security Council. I also thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive briefing on the clear

global threats and challenges that the destabilizing conduct of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea presents to us all.

I would like to start by discussing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It was and is a great diplomatic achievement and remains a cornerstone of our international security. As signatories, we have all benefited from its protections. It is our collective responsibility and in our collective interests to ensure that all nations stand by their commitments and obligations under the Treaty and its associated agreements; it is also our duty as members of the Council, and as responsible international actors. We must abide by our collective rules, defend our values and work together in the Council to safeguard a system of international security that benefits the whole of humankind. North Korea repeatedly and wilfully rebuffs that system and our collective values. Earlier this week, members of the Council heard appalling and harrowing accounts (see S/PV.8130) of the regime's brutal treatment of its own people — of women forced to drown their newborn babies because the regime did not consider them to be racially pure. We heard multiple examples of violations of foreign citizens' rights, including those of your own country, Mr. President.

Today we meet once again to condemn North Korea's illegal and dangerous nuclear-weapon programme. Kim Jong Un claims that he wants to be a responsible actor and to bring security and prosperity to his people. The regime's actions, exemplified by its systematic violation of human rights and its nuclear-weapon programme, demonstrate precisely the opposite intent. North Korea's pursuit of an intercontinental nuclear weapon is increasingly destabilizing for us all. It has fired some 20 ballistic missiles this year. We have seen three intercontinental ballistic-missile launches and two missiles launched across the territory of northern Japan. In response to those actions, the Council has unanimously and appropriately decided to impose the strictest sanctions in a generation on North Korea. Our community of nations has shown its deep condemnation of the regime by taking the sanctions seriously. And, of course, that has started to have an impact. We all have a responsibility to ensure that the sanctions are fully and properly implemented so that they have the desired effect.

Now that North Korea's arms dealers are discovering that their usual routes to clients are closed, its diplomats are struggling to process bank

transactions for contraband goods and their exporters of manual labour are finding that their contracts are not being renewed. We must therefore not only keep this pressure up but increase it. We must share information and expertise to prevent North Korea from using front companies or illicit channels to evade sanctions. We must all cooperate fully with the highly competent and professional United Nations Panel of Experts on North Korea sanctions, whose work we strongly recommend and will continue to support actively.

But we should be clear that the reason we enforce sanctions is to force Kim Jong Un to see that he has a choice of two paths. The path he is currently on will lead his country to greater poverty and isolation, and threatens the security not just of North Korea but of the entire world. He can and must choose to change course. He can choose to comply with the Security Council's resolutions and join the community of law-abiding nations. He can choose to let his people express themselves through debate and commerce. That is the real path to security and prosperity for the North Korean people; only Kim can now make that choice, and all of us here must work together to persuade him to make the right choice. Our message to Kim Jong Un and his regime must therefore be clear and united. For the well-being of his countrymen and the safety of his neighbours in the wider world, he must change course. I hope that the North Korean representative present here today conveys that strong message back to Pyongyang.

We must all work together and use all the diplomatic and economic tools at our disposal to deliver this uncompromising message. Let us stand firm and stand fast to our values. The world looks to all of us here to defend our system of international security. For the sake of future generations of humankind, we must now rise to the challenge.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Egypt continues to reiterate its strong condemnation of the activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as it seeks to arm itself with nuclear weapons and to develop and launch ballistic missiles, in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and in a manner that threatens international and regional peace and security. We do so based on our unwavering commitment to the importance of preserving the credibility of both the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Security Council. Egypt also reiterates the importance of ensuring that every United Nations entity, along with all international organizations and

the international community, is decisive in addressing any threat to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, without discrimination or double standards. It goes without saying that the need for all parties to respect the binding international consensus represented by the NPT is very important to Egypt, in view of the fact that it is one of the major pillars of the existing security regime. We also have to ensure that the Security Council deals consistently and impartially with any threat to that regime and with any measures that stand in the way of its universalization.

Egypt is also aware that the repeated violations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of the relevant Security Council resolutions constitute a threat to peace and security, to the stability of North-East Asia and to the national security of the friendly countries of Japan and the Republic of Korea. Egypt will therefore continue to call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately cease any actions that contravene Security Council resolutions and to refrain from any that may escalate tension and instability and threaten regional and international peace and security. We urge it to once more accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to implement the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards regime without delay.

Egypt reiterates the need for the Security Council and every United Nations entity to meet their responsibilities in this regard by seeking a sustainable peaceful settlement to the alarming situation on the Korean peninsula. Such a settlement should provide for the total elimination of the regime's nuclear weapons and the achievement of sustainable peace between North and South Korea, in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions. That should include efforts to revive negotiations and provide a favourable environment in which that can be done, so that we can escape from the current vicious circle of continued violations of Security Council resolutions by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

At the moment, the Security Council has only imposed additional sanctions without clear political prospects for a solution to the crisis. That will lead only to further deterioration of the situation, which could be a genuine international catastrophe. In that regard, Egypt followed with interest this month's recent visit to Pyongyang by Mr. Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs — the first of its kind by a senior United Nations official since 2010. We believe that continuing engagement and dialogue

with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is an imperative if we want to safeguard the chances for reviving negotiations and dialogue as a way to reach a peaceful solution to the current, serious crisis, which has implications for our collective security. In that connection, we would like to thank Mr. Feltman for his briefing of 12 December on the outcome of his visit to Pyongyang.

We underscore the need to continue with engagement and dialogue. We must not lose hope in the ability of the international community to reach a peaceful settlement that meets the agreed-upon provisions set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions related to nuclear disarmament and bring about sustainable peace in the Korean peninsula.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his briefing.

China firmly opposes the development by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, which are in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. China urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abide by those resolutions.

Since the beginning of 2017, the situation on the Korean peninsula has been one of constant tension. While the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has continued to conduct nuclear tests and missile launches, in defiance of the universal opposition by the international community, the parties concerned have continued to expand military exercises and scale up their shows of force. The escalation of tension on the Korean peninsula, which has reached the point of risking spiralling out of control, is not in the interests of any parties.

The nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula has lasted for over two decades. It has deep historical causes and takes place within a grave and complex context. Reviewing the evolution of the nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula, we can see that, when the parties concerned have tried to converge and respect one another's concerns, it has been possible to achieve results. On the other hand, when the parties have taken stubborn stances and disregarded the security of the other side, it has led to the deterioration of the situation. The current situation on the Korean peninsula is mired in a vicious cycle of tough posturing and confrontation, which is hardly a cause for optimism about the future.

However, the hope for peace is not totally lost. There is still a possibility of negotiations. The option of resorting to the use of force is an unacceptable one. China believes that all of the parties concerned should keep in mind the broader goal of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean peninsula, judge the situation calmly, make wise choices and take practical steps.

First, it is necessary to put an immediate end to rhetoric and actions that are unfavourable to denuclearization and the peace and security of the Korean peninsula. It is also necessary to ease the situation as soon as possible. The tough positions that have been taken by the parties concerned serve only to escalate tensions, deepen divisions and decrease mutual trust. Therefore, such positions are not helpful to the security of all parties. The parties concerned should keep calm and exercise restraint in order to prevent the situation on the Korean peninsula from worsening and getting out of control. They should create the necessary conditions for turning the situation around.

Secondly, it is necessary to act in accordance with the provisions and spirit of the Security Council resolutions relating to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and push for an appropriate settlement of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. Since 2016, the Council has unanimously adopted a series of resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Those resolutions represent the common will of the international community and constitute international obligations that must be observed by all parties. All parties must comprehensively implement the resolutions relating to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in their entirety; strengthen non-proliferation measures in order to curb the nuclear and missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; and actively push for a peaceful settlement through diplomatic and political means. At the same time, there is a need to avoid negatively impacting the livelihoods of the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the humanitarian assistance activities that are taking place in the country. Unilateral sanctions measures without the authorization of the Security Council undermine the unity of the Council and hurt the legitimate rights and interests of other countries. Therefore, such actions should be abandoned.

Thirdly, it is necessary for all sides to shoulder their respective responsibilities and fulfil their incumbent obligations in earnest. The current situation on the Korean peninsula has not been caused by any individual

party alone. It is not helpful to impose responsibility for resolving the problem on a single party. The parties concerned should try to converge instead of engaging in mutual blaming. They should also not try to abdicate their own responsibility and shift the blame onto others. The United States has committed to not seeking regime change, not pursuing the overthrow of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, not accelerating the reunification of the Korean peninsula and not moving its troops beyond the thirty-eighth parallel. We hope that the United States will turn those four commitments into concrete actions.

Fourthly, it is necessary to remain committed to peacefully settling the situation and resuming dialogue and negotiations as soon as possible. Security is at the core of the nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula. As such, the fundamental solution lies in addressing the security concerns of all parties, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in a balanced manner. There is no military option with respect to the settlement of the nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula. Resorting to force will only bring about disastrous consequences for the peninsula. Sanctions are a means, not an end. History shows that dialogue and negotiations are a fundamental way to ease tensions and advance the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The parties concerned should endeavour to turn the pressure of sanctions into the driving force behind the resumption of dialogue and negotiations. They should get the nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula back on the right track of peaceful settlement through dialogue and negotiations at an early date.

As a close neighbour of the Korean peninsula, China has persisted in promoting the denuclearization of the peninsula, preserving peace and stability on the peninsula and seeking a settlement to the situation through dialogue and negotiations. China is opposed to conflicts and chaos on the Korean peninsula. China has always supported and comprehensively and strictly implemented Security Council resolutions relating to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. By doing so, China has made greater efforts and paid a higher price than anyone else. It is irresponsible to doubt or challenge what China has done.

In view of the current situation on the peninsula, China has put forward the dual suspension proposal that would entail the suspension by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its nuclear and missile activities along with the suspension by the United States and the

Republic of Korea of large-scale military exercises. We have proposed the dual-track approach of promoting parallel progress in denuclearization efforts and the establishment of a peace mechanism on the peninsula. The Russian Federation has also put forward the idea of a phased approach to the settlement of the issues of the Korean peninsula.

On the basis of those proposals, China and the Russian Federation issued a joint statement on 4 July that proposed a road map for the settlement of the problems on the Korean peninsula. The joint proposal of China and Russia is practical and feasible and is aimed at promoting the peaceful settlement of the nuclear issue of the Korean peninsula and the maintenance of peace and stability on the peninsula. As such, we hope that the proposal will elicit responses and support from the parties concerned.

Due to historical reasons, the Korean peninsula is still under the shadow of the Cold War. That is the root cause of the protracted nature of, and lack of settlement for, the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. The parties concerned must reject Cold War thinking in all its forms, establish a concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and seek a peaceful settlement to the Korean nuclear issue through political and diplomatic means, so as to realize, at an early date, the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the long-term security and tranquillity of North-East Asia for the benefit of the people of the countries in the region.

China stands ready to work together with the parties concerned and the international community to continue to play a positive and constructive role for the realization of this goal.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Japanese presidency for having convened this important meeting, and I also thank the Secretary-General for his very informative briefing.

France is deeply concerned at the worsening situation on the Korean peninsula and by the significant risks therefrom to our collective security. This year the North Korean regime fired 20 ballistic missiles, three of them intercontinental, and carried out a nuclear test on an unprecedented scale. We have met 17 times, 12 on an emergency basis. North Korea today is an existential threat for our partners in the region; I would like to assure them of our full solidarity in the face of this unacceptable situation.

This unprecedented series of illicit and increasingly destabilizing actions has all the hallmarks of a dangerous escalation. The threats are real and proven, have already reached an unacceptable level and increase daily. That is why inaction and weakness are not options.

France believes that our action should be guided by three priorities.

The first to be clear-sighted in the face of the extreme seriousness of the situation. The multifaceted progress of North Korea in terms of its nuclear and ballistic capacity and probably in the chemical area as well represents a deep-seated change. The threat has gone from regional to global and from potential to immediate. Let us not be under any illusion: the threat is unprecedented and has no equivalent.

The North Korean regime, however, has to date shown no intention of reversing course. Instead, forging ahead with its illicit nuclear and ballistic programmes, it continues to flout its international obligations and to defy the Council, to the detriment of its own people. I would stress here that the tragic situation of human rights in North Korea is only getting worse, and we heard earlier this week. With regard to the humanitarian situation, it is indeed the North Korean regime that bears the primarily responsibility.

Secondly, given this very dangerous and volatile situation, the main focus of our action must be to stand firm, primarily because the dangerous spiral in which North Korea is engaged threatens the very foundations of our collective security system, which together we have the responsibility to preserve.

It is vital that we react to this testing of the non-proliferation regime and avoid any possibility of impunity, which would necessarily lead to other aspects being called into question. What is at stake here is our ability to not only ensure our own security but also to prevent any disruption of the strategic balance in Asia and, beyond that, the strategic stability that underlies peace and security.

In that framework, our action should take place on two tracks. It is indispensable, first, to implement existing sanctions strictly and comprehensively, in the face of the formidable inventiveness of North Korean networks in circumventing our decisions and escape their effects. Everyone knows that the uneven implementation of sanctions seriously affects the effectiveness of our collective action. Their correct

implementation is the responsibility of all Member States, beginning with the ones seated on the Council.

We must also react methodically and with determination to all North Korean provocations in order to prevent further escalation and to preserve the non-proliferation regime. If North Korea continues to defy our injunctions and to ignore our appeals to reason, North Korea will leave us with no other choice than to strengthen the sanctions, on the understanding that sanctions are not a goal in themselves and that target the regime for what it does and not for what it is.

The third and final priority must be the potential for diplomacy to find a political solution. We do not close, and have never closed, the door to dialogue. All our efforts, on the contrary, are aimed at convincing Pyongyang to return to the negotiating table and to agree to negotiations on its nuclear and ballistic programme. But it is clear that given North Korea's obstinacy, today only maximum pressure can enable us to return to the path of negotiation.

France is, of course, in favour of the resumption of negotiations, but it is up to the North Korean regime to give us clear indications that it is prepared to talk, and the sooner the better.

France is convinced that maximum pressure on the North Korean regime is our best lever to enable dialogue, which itself is the condition for a political solution. Failing that, anything that could be seen by the North Korean regime as a sign of weakness or of disunity among us would encourage it to continue its provocations and objectively aggravate the threat of an extreme scenario.

So, quite simply, the firmness that France is calling on the Council to show is our best antidote in the light of the threat of war and our best chance to chart a course towards dialogue and therefore towards the political solution that we all seek.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): We thank the Japanese presidency for having organized this timely and important high-level meeting on the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, over which we are pleased to see you presiding, Mr. Minister. Our own Minister would have been here today had it not been for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development Council of Ministers meeting and the high-level revitalization forum, both due to take place in the coming days in Addis Ababa.

We thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his briefing on the topic of our discussion today, which, we understand, was one of the issues raised during his visit to Tokyo. We share his views, and it is no wonder, therefore, that in this statement we may have to repeat what the Secretary-General has stressed.

We can imagine the level of anxiety and deep concern in Japan concerning the repeated ballistic-missile tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We know that most of those missiles fell into Japan's exclusive economic zone and that some of them flew over its territory. It is not difficult to realize how sensitive this issue is to the people and the Government of Japan, as the only country to ever suffer a nuclear attack.

However, the nuclear and ballistic-missile activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea pose a grave danger not only to Japan and the region of North-East Asia; as a matter of fact, there is no greater threat to global peace and security at the moment than the potential nuclear catastrophe that is hanging over the Korean peninsula. One does not need to be an expert in the area to know that no war on the peninsula would be limited. The possibility that it could spread must not be discounted. That is why every possible diplomatic effort must be made to avert this potentially dangerous situation, which could have devastating consequences for the region and the world at large.

At this stage, it has become all the more apparent that there is no option other than a path of peace and diplomacy to resolving the crisis on the Korean peninsula. In that regard, priority should be given to easing the heightened tensions and avoiding the risk of miscalculations through all available means, including by reopening communications channels, if none are open at the moment. We are under no illusions that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea issue can be resolved any time soon, but it is absolutely essential that all sides start taking meaningful steps, however small, to build the necessary trust and confidence, which could help pave the way for a resumption of dialogue and negotiations to find a comprehensive and lasting solution to the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Everyone agrees that this is the key to preserving peace and security in North-East Asia.

We very much welcomed Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman's visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the first by a senior official of the United Nations since 2010. It is a small but important step in the right direction, and we greatly appreciated the extremely useful briefing that we received on the range of discussions that he had with North Korean officials in Pyongyang. What the visit has shown is that the engagement of the United Nations and, especially, of the Secretary-General's good offices, could be helpful. While nothing concrete came out of Mr. Feltman's visit, we believe that the various discussions he held may contribute to a better understanding of the thinking in Pyongyang and to devising a strategy of engagement to bring the Democratic People's Republic of Korea back to the negotiating table. In our view, that is absolutely critical.

In the meantime, the full and effective implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions by all Member States remains crucial — as was pointed out by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) when he reported to the Council (see S/PV.8127) on the work of the Committee in 2017 — to creating

“conditions conducive to restarting negotiations, while at the same time hindering the development of the nuclear and ballistic-missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea”.

Regardless of that, I would like to point to the need to pay attention to the humanitarian situation in the country. We hope that the recent United Nations engagement with the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will contribute to improving the provision of lifesaving humanitarian assistance to the population in need. It might also help to raise the level of mutual trust, which is currently non-existent. We welcome the presence of the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at this meeting.

Lastly, it is only through the unity of the Council that we can avert the dangerous situation on the Korean peninsula, and at this critical juncture it is only appropriate to focus on what would help to improve cooperation among members of Council in ensuring the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We should not lose hope of the possibility of achieving that goal.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank you, Mr. Kono, for presiding over our meeting today, and the Secretary-General for his

briefing on the situation on the Korean peninsula. There can be no doubt that we are experiencing one of the most acute and dramatic phases in the evolving situation there. We can say without exaggeration that peace in that region is being seriously tested and the risk that the situation could be transformed from one of confrontation to outright conflict is greater than it has ever been. Military rhetoric, accompanied by rash muscle-flexing between the participants, has led to a situation in which the whole world is seriously beginning to wonder whether there will be a war or not. As we know, in such tense circumstances one ill-considered or misinterpreted step could have dire consequences.

Russia has been watching the dangerously evolving situation in the region with concern. Needless to say, we are united in our condemnation of Pyongyang's provocative nuclear-missile activity, which has gained dangerous momentum in the past year and a half. A situation such as that of the latest launch, which was made from North Korean territory with no warning whatever, endangering the lives of ordinary citizens, including those travelling by air and sea in the region, is absolutely unacceptable. We repudiate any such action by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which reinforces our support for all the relevant Security Council sanctions resolutions, which we have implemented to the letter. We call on the North Korean authorities to wind down their banned programmes and return as a non-nuclear State to the non-proliferation regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency. However, it should be clear to everyone that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is hardly going to renounce its nuclear-missile programme while it still feels that its security is directly threatened, which is exactly how Pyongyang sees the regular large-scale manoeuvres and exercises that the United States and its allies conduct in the region.

We want to once again confirm our commitment to implementing the international sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That said, as we have emphasized time and again, such measures should not be an end in themselves but rather a tool for engaging countries in constructive negotiations on substantive issues. Diplomacy is not just about sanctions, and sanctions are not diplomacy at all, in spite of some partners' efforts to convince us otherwise — or at least they are not diplomacy in the traditional sense but rather a blunt instrument of persuasion when all

other methods have been exhausted. There is a whole range of other methods in the diplomatic arsenal. All of the Council's decisions on sanctions also include the obligation to fulfil a political component, something that many people forget, unfortunately, as they focus on the restrictions alone.

It will be impossible to settle the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula through sanctions and pressure on Pyongyang alone. Sanctions should not be used to strangle the Democratic People's Republic of Korea economically or worsen its humanitarian situation. That applies especially to unilateral restrictions, which affect civilian sectors that have nothing to do with the country's nuclear-missile programmes and are one reason for the serious deterioration in the population's living conditions. Furthermore, unilateral limits that circumvent or intensify action taken through the Security Council undermine the effectiveness of the Security Council's decisions on a political solution to the situation on the Korean peninsula, not to mention the damage that they do to third countries' legitimate interests. Incidentally, I would like to inform the Secretary of State of the United States that the North Korean workers in Russia are not working in conditions of slavery but on the basis of an inter-Governmental agreement with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that guarantees their rights. And while I am addressing the Secretary of State, I would like to add that we very much hope that his four no's will become the basis for the United States approach to resolving the crisis on the Korean peninsula.

With regard to the Security Council sanctions regime, we have to acknowledge that the humanitarian exemptions identified in them are not working. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs recently briefed the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) about this. The ban on correspondent relations with banks in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has complicated not only purchases of food and goods abroad for the domestic economy but also the financing of those United Nations agencies that are still operating there.

There can be no question that the refusal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions is unacceptable. But neither are attempts of any kind to resolve the long-standing problems in the region by military means alone. We only have to look to the history of the Korean War to

understand that. In the current situation, we urge all the parties concerned to prevent any further escalation of the tension that accompanies each new cycle of reactions and counterreactions. We must reconsider the policy of mutual pressure and intimidation. It does not get results. In our view, a comprehensive approach to resolving the situation is essential. The Korean peninsula cannot be denuclearized without normalizing the military and political situation generally; refraining from building up military infrastructure, including the deployment by the United States in the region of elements of its global missile defence system; reducing the scale of military manoeuvres; and establishing an atmosphere of trust among the States of North-East Asia.

Recently, unfortunately, we have been seeing the reverse of this picture. In October and December, Washington and its allies responded to two and a half months of silence from Pyongyang by holding unscheduled and unprecedentedly large-scale manoeuvres and exercises on the borders of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as by introducing new unilateral sanctions and including it on its list of State sponsors of terrorism. All these steps make us wonder about the sincerity of all the declarations about the preferability of peaceful approaches to resolving the crisis regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We call on the stakeholders to take practical measures to de-escalate the situation as soon as possible. In particular, it would be a good idea to skip the planned regular military exercises. It goes without saying that Pyongyang must also cease its nuclear-missile tests. We are ready to cooperate more closely with all partners with a view to achieving a speedy settlement of the issues on the Korean peninsula through political and diplomatic means, the only possible path, and a mutually respectful dialogue. That is the aim behind Russia and China's road map for a settlement. We call on all parties involved in the preparation and holding of the Olympic Games in South Korea to refrain from any kind of provocation or ill-conceived initiatives during the period of preparation and holding of the Olympic Games in South Korea, and to use the time to find a way to reach a political and diplomatic settlement.

In conclusion, I would like to address Mr. Klimkin, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, who spoke here today, and to advise him that when he graces the Security Council with his presence, he should do it at meetings where his fairy-tales about what goes on in

Ukraine will at least have some vague connection to the item on the Council's agenda.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): I would like to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his informative briefing on this very serious issue. The situation with regard to North Korea is an issue on which we all have a unified position.

First, we do not want to see the nuclear club expand and we will not accept any State's aspirations to acquire nuclear weapons. Kazakhstan has been and remains an active supporter of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, which we believe can be achieved through confidence-building and reaching pragmatic compromises aimed at building a mutually safe and peaceful coexistence.

Secondly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's reckless missile launches and nuclear tests represent the most serious possible violations of Security Council resolutions. Kazakhstan has experienced all the devastating consequences of nuclear tests and therefore supports their prohibition in the twenty-first century. To this day, unfortunately, we have still been unable to achieve the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which could make ending all tests a reality. We must outlaw nuclear testing in the modern world.

Thirdly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should comply with the requirements of all the relevant Security Council resolutions. Only thorough and strict adherence to them will ease the sanctions regime imposed on Pyongyang. It is in the interests of the Government of North Korea to engage in a substantive dialogue and resume the negotiation process in order to avoid the potentially irreversible negative consequences of its irresponsible behaviour. In this respect, we recommend capitalizing on the recent contact between the Secretariat and the Government of North Korea with the aim of expanding the window of opportunity it represents for peaceful cooperation and diplomacy. We should also reduce the risk of conflict and any further deterioration of the difficult humanitarian situation created by funding cuts, which can seriously affect the lives of ordinary citizens in the country.

The current situation on the Korean peninsula is the most tense and dangerous there has ever been. We must prevent all possible miscalculations and strive to reduce the risk of escalating the conflict. All sides must refrain from negative rhetoric and actions. We must

work to create the conditions necessary for continuing the contacts initiated between the United Nations and Pyongyang. Today's meeting of the Council sends a clear signal to North Korea that its nuclear path will not provide any guarantees for the security and well-being of its own people or anyone else.

Kazakhstan's non-nuclear path could serve as a practical guide for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and other countries striving to obtain nuclear capabilities. We have built and strengthened our independence and gained international respect by renouncing nuclear weapons. My President demonstrated strong political will in ridding our country of nuclear weapons and tests in a very challenging environment at a time of radical transformation of the world order. As time has shown, it was the right decision. I would like to thank Secretary of State Tillerson for mentioning that fact in the recent debate on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in this Chamber (see S/PV.8053). We therefore call on the leadership of North Korea to renounce its nuclear weapons for the benefit of all.

Mr. Rosselli Frieri (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to thank Minister Kono for presiding over our work today and Secretary-General Guterres for his briefing. We share the concern of the Security Council's Japanese presidency and believe this debate is very timely. It is particularly important at a time when the situation on the North Korean peninsula represents a major threat to international peace and security.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, chemical or biological, is a serious, real threat to international peace and security. Such weapons should not be used by anyone under any circumstances. Uruguay would like to emphasize that it is the duty of all States to strictly respect their disarmament and non-proliferation obligations under international law as outlined in such documents as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Charter of the United Nations.

Uruguay has frequently expressed its categorical condemnation of North Korea's nuclear tests and ballistic-missile launches, and will continue to do so if North Korea continues its threatening behaviour and its violations of the relevant Security Council resolutions. We once again urge it to abandon its nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible way and immediately cease all related activities, including

launching missiles with ballistic technology. We urge it to return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Security Council's sanctions represent an attempt to bring the North Korean Government to the negotiating table. However, and despite all the calls of the international community to engage in dialogue, it has so far not been impossible to get back to the negotiations that are essential to unblock the situation. The sanctions imposed on North Korea must be implemented completely and effectively by all Member States. At the same time, they must not have adverse effects on the population. We are therefore concerned that the sanctions could be having unintended negative effects on the humanitarian situation in the country, and we deem it appropriate to carry out a careful analysis of the problem.

Throughout its participation as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Uruguay has supported all the actions taken with regard to North Korea. Likewise, we have consistently stated our position in support of every initiative that aims to achieve dialogue. There is no military solution to the North Korea issue. The denuclearization of the Korean peninsula must be carried out in a peaceful manner through diplomatic negotiations that produce a political commitment among the parties. We must aim to achieve that without further delay, before it is too late and before we are left to lament the consequences of a major disaster.

We very much appreciate the recent visit to North Korea by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman, which was a concrete step in the right direction following an extremely prolonged hiatus. It is crucial to maintain an open channel of communication between the United Nations and the Government of North Korea. That will allow us to create the appropriate conditions for the resumption of negotiations.

It will also be necessary to address the interests and legitimate concerns of all the parties concerned in the matter, and efforts to build trust between the parties should therefore be intensified. As States Members of the United Nations, we are convinced that there is no other alternative to dialogue.

Mr. Seck (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Senegal thanks Japan for convening this meeting and is pleased to see Mr. Taro Kono, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, presiding over this debate on the issue of

the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). We also thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his briefing, which has contributed to our debate.

We are again gathered in this forum to discuss the issue of non-proliferation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Each time we have met, my country, Senegal, has reaffirmed its firm condemnation of the many acts of defiance that that country has perpetrated against the wishes of the international community in general, and in particular those of the Security Council, including 17 ballistic-missile launches — two of which were intercontinental — and a sixth nuclear test in September, which the North Korean Government itself presented as a hydrogen bomb test on a previously unparalleled scale.

We are certainly facing a new scenario. Following its most recent successful intercontinental ballistic missile test on 28 November and continuing methodically to pursue its programmes in the area of nuclear weapons and missiles, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has displayed, more than ever before, its determination to acquire a military nuclear capability, if it has not already done so.

Senegal sees that as a serious threat to the international non-proliferation regime, considerably exacerbating tensions, which are already high in the Korean peninsula and beyond. It also poses a serious threat not only to the people of the peninsula and the region, but also to the safety of air navigation in that part of the world, which is particularly characterized by density in population and air traffic activity.

In that context, it is the Security Council that faces a serious challenge, because, despite all the resolutions and sanctions adopted and other measures taken against the activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, that country is far from abandoning its nuclear ambitions and has gone as far as to question the very competence of the Council to address the issue posed by its illegal military programme.

Clearly, the recent adoption of resolutions 2371 (2017) and 2375 (2017) has not changed anything. Therefore, the question arises: what more do we have to do to encourage that country to respect its international obligations in a clear, irreversible and verifiable way? To answer that question, and while taking into account our collective belief that there can be no military solution to the crisis, my country calls

for a global, peaceful and negotiated solution through an open and frank dialogue. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to its previously held position, which it regrettably chose to leave, and to pursue the Six-Party Talks.

Senegal calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respect its international obligations. We emphasize that the targeted measures that have rightly been taken in the latest Council resolution against North Korea to meet the challenge of that country's nuclear and ballistic programme must be part of a comprehensive political strategy, as the only viable option is for the parties to engage in an open dialogue for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, with the active support of the international community, so as to create the conditions for the peaceful coexistence of the countries and peoples of the region.

That means that Member States must redouble their efforts and fully apply the obligations set forth in the various resolutions, because the absence of a real political will or the lack of action on the part of Member States would result in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Senegal believes that we must work to strengthen the primacy of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) through its universalization and the fulfilment of previously agreed commitments.

We are convinced that working towards the universalization of the NPT and the implementation of its relevant provisions, as well as resolute action aimed at ensuring the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, would mark decisive milestones towards general and complete disarmament.

Mr. Cardì (Italy): At the outset, allow me to thank the Japanese presidency for convening this important debate, as well as the Secretary-General for his briefing. We also appreciate the visit to Pyongyang last week by Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman, and we support the United Nations efforts to establish a channel of communication with the authorities of North Korea aimed at reducing the risk of unintentional escalation.

There can be no ambiguity in our analysis of the current scenario. The deterioration seen over the past year is a direct consequence of the North Korean regime's illegal and destabilizing activities. The threat is immediate and global in scope. We once again express our full solidarity with the citizens of Japan and South Korea, and we cannot forget the plight of the people of

North Korea as their Government diverts energy and resources towards the development of illegal weapons of mass destruction.

We have repeatedly seen how the regime's unprecedented provocations in the form of developing nuclear arms and missile capabilities have caused tensions to flare up in the Korean peninsula and beyond, which, in our view, constitutes one of the gravest threats to international peace and security that we face today. We strongly condemn those activities and call on North Korea to abide by its international obligations. We also call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its chemical-weapons programme and immediately adhere to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, as called for in resolution 2371 (2017).

It is clear that a conflict on the Korean peninsula would be catastrophic for the region and for the world. Therefore, the Council's response this year has had to be forceful and effective. Three new resolutions were adopted providing for the most comprehensive set of sanctions in a generation. We have also taken significant additional measures in the European Union and at the national level. For instance, Italy recently suspended the accreditation procedure for the designated Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to Rome.

The sanctions are designed to achieve three main goals: first, to make the North Korean regime realize that further provocation will lead only to greater isolation; secondly, to stop the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from exploiting the interconnected nature of the global economy in order to fund its illegal weapons programme; and, thirdly, to provide the necessary leverage in order to bring about a verifiable change in that regime's policies, thereby opening the way towards a political solution based on complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization. I wish to emphasize that that strategy will work fully only if two conditions are met: first, the full and comprehensive implementation of the sanctions by the entire United Nations membership; and, secondly, continued unity in the Council on the issue.

As Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), Italy has worked to improve the implementation of sanctions throughout this year, but many challenges remain. Such an articulated and broad sanctions regime requires

constant interaction with Member States so as to bridge information gaps. Furthermore, many countries face capacity challenges. There is also an issue relating to timing. The delay in turning sanctions provisions into national legislation may create opportunities for evading them. That is why it is crucial to submit national implementation reports on time. While we have seen a steady increase in that regard over the past year, there is room for improvement. Let me underline the importance and urgency of the submission of implementation reports by all Member States with regard to all of the sanctions resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Lastly, I wish to reiterate that sanctions are not meant to have unintended negative consequences on the humanitarian situation in the country, which continues to be a matter of serious concern. Of course, we must bear in mind that it is the regime of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that bears the primary responsibility for improving the livelihood of its people. We continue to engage with all the relevant stakeholders on that issue. Last week I chaired a productive meeting of the Sanctions Committee aimed at addressing the humanitarian situation. In that context, we renew our appeal to humanitarian actors to make full use of the relevant existing exemptions provided for in the various Security Council resolutions. We also believe that more timely and systematic interaction between United Nations agencies and the Sanctions Committee could go a long way to averting unnecessary obstacles in providing humanitarian assistance to the North Korean people.

Mr. Inchauste Jordán (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to begin by welcoming the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr. Taro Kono, to the Security Council today to preside over our work. We would also like to thank Secretary-General Guterres for his briefing

Bolivia, as a pacifist country, promotes the culture of dialogue and the right to peace, as well as cooperation among the peoples of the world, with full respect for their sovereignty, through diplomacy in their relations with each other. In that regard, our Constitution prohibits the manufacture and use of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons on Bolivian territory.

As part of the first densely populated zone in the world that declared itself free of nuclear weapons, through the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear

Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and as the first region to declare itself a zone of peace, we urge that our example be replicated in other regions of the world.

In that regard, Bolivia expresses its strongest and most energetic condemnation of the ballistic missile launches and the nuclear tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We call on that country to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missiles programme in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and to comply with the provisions of Security Council resolutions and return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

We would point out the importance of complying with the Charter of the United Nations, which designates the Security Council as the only legal organ that can take the necessary measures to maintain or re-establish international peace and security, in that way ruling out any unilateral action.

We therefore reject any act of provocation or application of unilateral sanctions, not only because they constitute a flagrant violation of international law but also because they undermine the efforts and work of multilateral organizations such as our own, as unilateral sanctions seek to extend the jurisdiction and internal legislation of one State to another, thereby violating the principles of equality, sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the States. We therefore urge all the parties involved to avoid increasing tensions or escalating rhetoric, and we call on them to stop the current spiral of confrontation and threats of the use of military force. It must be understood that there can be no military solution to the situation on the Korean peninsula.

The sanctions imposed in the resolutions adopted by the Council should not be an end in themselves. They should serve as a stimulus aimed at bringing the parties to the negotiating table so that they can resume dialogue and achieve a peaceful, diplomatic and political solution that results in the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

So far this year, the Security Council has adopted three resolutions, which are increasingly harsh and, depending on their degree of implementation, are also affecting the civilian population with possible humanitarian consequences. We believe that, as is clearly stated in those resolutions, it is not only necessary to work to implement those sanctions, but also to bring

about a return to dialogue and a resumption of the Six-Party Talks. That is essential.

We reiterate our support for the Chinese initiative of simultaneous suspensions on the Korean peninsula. On the one hand, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would stop its nuclear and ballistic missile tests immediately, and, on the other hand, all types of unilateral or joint military exercises in the region would also cease. We also reiterate our support for the Russian-Chinese proposal and road map, which is, to date, the only concrete proposal that has been presented to resolve the situation.

Along those lines, with regard to the efforts made to re-establish mechanisms for dialogue, we would highlight the recent visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman. We hope that the communication channels that could be established will remain open in order to initiate a dialogue without preconditions and build mutual trust.

Finally, my delegation would like to state that today we are meeting at a time of great tension globally. With regard to the situation on the Korean peninsula, we feel that it is important to begin a dialogue that will give rise to stability in the region and achieve just and lasting peace.

The President: The representative of Ukraine has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Klimkin (Ukraine): I would like to respond to what the Russian representative said a few moments ago. With regard to the point about the proper format for addressing various issues, our basic view is that Russia violated the Budapest Memorandum on security assurances and various other legal written and unwritten commitments, which has created an atmosphere of impunity, which has contributed to the situation in which we now find ourselves.

As I listened to your statement, Mr. President — in which the narrative was basically about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's violations of international law and sanctions, and its taking of hostages — I realized that the same narrative, in fact, applies to Russia and its violations of international law and sanctions and its taking of hostages. There we have one big rogue State and one smaller rogue State, and the difference is only one of scale.

I also wanted to react to one point that in my view represents a twisted, irresponsible and astounding kind of logic. The Russian representative said that in a way, North Korea's nuclear and missile programme is a response to the exercises being conducted on and around the Korean peninsula. This year, Russia has been carrying out huge military drills in Belarus while trying to confuse everyone about their objective and scale. So, following Russia's logic, I should now call for my country to become a nuclear Power and develop a missile programme. In a way, that embodies an enormously irresponsible way of thinking that could trigger a worldwide nuclear arms race tomorrow. In my view, what it shows is that we must stop trying to find any excuse we can for any wrongful behaviour. That is my fundamental point, and I just wanted to take this opportunity to make it again.

The President: The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I will be very brief. I am not going to get into a substantive discussion with the Foreign Minister of Ukraine. I just want to say that I am glad that there are a lot of people in the Chamber today, because they have been able to see for themselves the Ukrainian delegation's lack of respect for the Security Council and other Member States.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Cho Hyun (Republic of Korea): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's meeting and for the opportunity to speak to the Security Council. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

Let me start by rewinding the clock to December 2016, after the Council's adoption of resolutions 2270 (2016) and 2321 (2016) in response to North Korea's fourth and fifth nuclear tests, in the hope that that would change North Korea's behaviour. When we fast forward to December 2017, however, the situation has deteriorated further. This year, North Korea conducted yet another nuclear test and launched 20 ballistic missiles. To be fair, the international community responded by further strengthening and implementing the Security Council's resolutions, while not losing sight of the efforts to resume a dialogue. Those endeavours, however, have not been enough to bring

North Korea back to the negotiating table for talks on denuclearization.

A little more than a couple of weeks ago, North Korea launched its most advanced ballistic missile, with an intercontinental range. Afterwards, it claimed to have completed its State nuclear force. Despite the differing assessments, what is certain is that North Korea is indeed in the final stages of nuclear weaponization. If that is in fact completed, it will fundamentally alter the security landscape in the region and beyond. Many commentators point out that it will aggravate tension in an already heavily militarized region, and they even worry about the risk of nuclear proliferation to rogue States and non-State actors. North Korea also threatens to shatter the foundations of the international non-proliferation regimes and continues to inflict lasting harm on its own people. Now more than ever, the international community must grasp the gravity and urgency of this threat and find ways to halt North Korea's nuclear programme and bring it back to the path of denuclearization.

What matters most now is not mere assessments of the North Korean threat but rather our united will and firm action against the regime. North Korea is waging a fierce battle of wills with the international community. It wants to be recognized as a nuclear-weapon State on its own terms and conditions. Our answer should be absolutely no. We should not be coerced by North Korea's continuing provocations but rather uphold our principles, while responding firmly to its reckless behaviour. At the same time, we should not be provoked into conflict nor should we shut the doors to dialogue and peace. Our common goal is the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of North Korea in a peaceful manner. In that context, I would like to underscore that the 2018 PyeongChang Olympic Winter Games should be an Olympics for peace. My Government urges North Korea to join the Olympic Games and to seize that opportunity for dialogue.

North Korea is also waging a battle of actions against the international community. Time and again, it has found and taken advantage of the loopholes in Security Council resolution, and it has preyed on the weak links in the international community. The sanctions are not an end in themselves. They are meant not to bring down North Korea but to bring it to the negotiating table for talks on denuclearization. However, if we are to bring an unwilling North Korea back to the table, we must fill in all the gaps identified in the implementation of

the resolutions. In that regard, we deeply appreciate the active efforts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006).

The international community has made some progress, including through its restrictions on oil supplies, the export ban on North Korea's key products and its ban on overseas work authorizations. Many countries, even those with a long-standing relationship with North Korea, have joined those efforts, including by expelling individuals on the sanctions list. The record number of submissions of implementation reports for resolutions 2270 (2016) and 2321 (2016) is a testimony to the enhanced awareness of the international community regarding the North Korean threat.

However, in our race against North Korea, we need to do more — much more. North Korea's evasive tactics are becoming more sophisticated, and the regime continues to exploit every weak link. In fact, the Republic of Korea has been actively cooperating with its partners to identify and stop North Korea's attempts to evade sanctions, to seek alternative routes in order to sell coal and other banned products and to illegally import oil. Let me emphasize that none of us should become such a weak link, and none of us should condone groups or individuals who assist North Korea in its defiance of the Council. In that regard, sharing best practices in countering North Korea's evasive tactics will be helpful in closing loopholes.

I began my remarks by recalling how we ended 2016 and how North Korea defiantly continued its series of provocations in 2017. We cannot afford to meet once again at end of 2018 with the feeling that the situation is one of *déjà vu* like in the 2017 situation and regretting our business-as-usual approach. Council members and the international community must redouble their efforts to ensure the seamless and complete implementation of sanctions, and apply as much pressure as is necessary until North Korea returns to the negotiation table with a sincere willingness to commit to denuclearization.

We should convey to North Korea that sense of urgency, so that it understands unequivocally that it will pay heavily for its provocations, that it will never be accepted as a nuclear-weapon State and that dialogue leading to denuclearization is the only viable option. The Republic of Korea reaffirms its solid commitment to achieving the denuclearization of North Korea and the establishment of lasting peace on the Korean

peninsula. We will work closely with all countries to that end.

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

Mr. Ja Song Nam (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): At the outset, I condemn Japan, in the strongest possible terms, which has assumed the presidency of the Security Council for December and is, at the instigation of the United States, evilly taking advantage of this opportunity to convene a ministerial Security Council briefing on the issue of non-proliferation concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I feel compelled to say that today's meeting is nothing other than a desperate move on the part of the United States, which is terrified of the incredible might of our Republic, now that we have successfully achieved the great historic goal of completing our State nuclear force and building a missile arsenal, as demonstrated by the great event of November.

I believe that, if the issue of non-proliferation is to be discussed, the first country to be brought to account should be the United States, which is the kingpin of vertical and horizontal proliferation, as it pours astronomical amounts of funding into modernizing nuclear weapons and hinders in every way the denuclearization of the Middle East, as well as Japan, which maintains a greater-than-necessary stockpile of plutonium and is seeking every opportunity to produce nuclear weapons. Our possession of nuclear weapons was inevitable as a self-defensive measure intended to defend our sovereignty and our right to exist and develop from the United States nuclear threat and blackmail. If anyone is to blame it is the United States, and it must be held accountable.

There are several nuclear-weapon States throughout the world today, but there is no other country like the United States, which continues to threaten and blackmail other countries openly with its nuclear weapons. That conclusion is quite evident if we merely consider the amount of money that the United States spends for the maintenance and modernization of its nuclear weapons. It is well known that the United States has stockpiled more than 4,000 nuclear warheads in its nuclear arsenals and has deployed more than 150 tactical nuclear bombs throughout the territory of its NATO allies and is now planning to earmark approximately \$1 trillion for the

maintenance and modernization of its nuclear weapons over the next 30 years.

All of the statistics that I have just mentioned clearly demonstrate that the United States is the ring leader of nuclear proliferation. It is also disturbing to witness the Security Council acting as a tool of the United States and doing its bidding instead of maintaining impartiality, which is vital to its activities, and instead of keeping true to its mission to maintain international peace and security. While the Security Council has ignored our repeated requests to raise the issue of the provocative and aggressive joint military exercises — the most obvious manifestation of the United States nuclear threats and blackmail — in this forum, it busies itself with kowtowing to the United States, which advocates for sanctions and pressure against us by condemning our self-defensive measures.

Every time that United States-South Korea joint military exercises — which seriously threaten the peace and security of the Korean peninsula, the region and the world — have been conducted, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has submitted letters to the Security Council, 11 times since 2014, requesting that the issue be raised and discussed urgently in the Council. However, while turning its back on every one of our requests to address those aggressive joint military exercises, the Security Council has, on the contrary, adopted 11 sanctions resolutions directed against my country and has condemned our self-defensive measures as a threat to international peace and security. Merely by citing the facts just mentioned, we can easily demonstrate the unfairness, double standards and petty prejudice of the Security Council.

As we have clarified on behalf of our Government, the development and advancement of the strategic weapons of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are entirely intended to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country from the United States policy of nuclear blackmail and nuclear threat, and ensure a peaceful life for our people. We therefore do not pose any threat to any country or region, as long as the interests of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are not infringed upon. I reiterate once again that our nuclear force is devoted solely to its mission as a self-defensive deterrent, and it is fully in line with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, which stipulates the right of the exercise of self-defensive measures to be taken by an individual United Nations State Member.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in accordance with the decree of the Supreme People's Assembly adopted on 1 April 2013, has established an absolutely perfect system and order of stockpiling and maintaining its technology and weapon-grade nuclear materials in order to fully guarantee that no kind of illegal transfer of nuclear weapons will take place.

As a result, not a single case has been raised about our nuclear proliferation to date. All the data on impunity that has been scattered around by hostile forces in relation to my country's proliferation is a totally groundless plot intending to defame the dignity of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the powerful nuclear State. Taking up the issue of our strengthening of national defensive measures is nothing but violent behaviour of interference.

The possession of nuclear weapons by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea cannot constitute a violation of international law or regulations in any case, as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea withdrew from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in a most justified way. At the same time, it is clear to everybody that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is not infringing upon any of the interests of other countries and that the purpose of possessing nuclear deterrents is only for self-defence and to safeguard peace in the region.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, no matter what anyone says, will march forward and victoriously make great advancements as the world's most powerful nuclear and military State, upholding the line on simultaneous development of the two fronts.

In conclusion, I hereby reaffirm once again that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as a responsible nuclear Power and a peace-loving State, will sincerely fulfil its non-proliferation obligations assumed before the international community and make every effort to achieve the noble cause of safeguarding world peace and security.

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

Mr. Tillerson (United States of America): I would like to take a moment to respond to the statements made by the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

First, I think we have heard all of these things before from that Government. There is no doubt that the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea's pursuit of a nuclear arsenal is in clear violation of international law, directly challenges the global non-proliferation regime and greatly threatens international peace and security.

This organ has unanimously made those points for well over a decade now. The international community condemns North Korea's pursuit of a nuclear arsenal, and we will never accept a nuclear North Korea. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's unlawful acts cannot be ignored, nor can they be explained away. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must be held accountable for its actions.

In that regard, in response to any notion that the source of tensions on the peninsula are the fault of no one party, there is but one party that has carried out illegal detonations of nuclear devices. There is but one party that continues to launch intercontinental ballistic missiles in violation of Security Council resolutions, overflying another sovereign nation — Japan — and threatening civil aviation security because, as those launches are undertaken with no notification. There is but one party that has been targeted with punishment and penalties through the most vigorous sanctions regime ever enacted, and that is the Kim Jong Un regime in North Korea. They alone are responsible for these tensions, they alone must take responsibility for these tensions and they alone can solve these tensions.

The President: I shall now make some concluding remarks in my capacity as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

Japan has consistently devoted itself to creating a free and democratic country, while respecting human rights and abiding by the rule of law, as well as supporting peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region as a peace-loving nation. The path Japan has walked as a peace-loving nation will not change in future and will continue contributing to the peace and prosperity of the world more than ever before.

In our meeting today we have condemned, in the strongest terms, the acts of provocation by North Korea in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. We have once again made it clear that the international community will never accept a nuclear-armed North Korea. I call on all Member States to fully implement the relevant Security Council resolutions and maximize international pressure on North Korea in order to realize a denuclearized Korean peninsula.

After our presidency this month, Japan will leave the Security Council. However, we will continue to cooperate closely with the remaining and incoming members, as well as with non-members, so that the North Korean issue will be properly addressed in the Council.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The representative of the Republic of Korea has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Cho Hyun (Republic of Korea): I am compelled to reply to North Korea's truly regrettable arguments.

As shown in multiple Security Council resolutions, the international community has repeatedly made it clear that it will not recognize North Korea as a nuclear-weapon State in any case. North Korea must stop its provocations and sincerely return to dialogue towards denuclearization. Hopefully, North Korea will recognize that that is the only path towards a secure and stable future.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.