



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

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Wednesday, 11 December 2019, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mrs. Craft (United States of America)

Members:

Belgium	Mrs. Van Vlierberge
China	Mr. Zhang Jun
Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Adom
Dominican Republic	Mr. Singer Weisinger
Equatorial Guinea	Mrs. Mele Colifa
France	Mr. De Rivière
Germany	Mr. Heusgen
Indonesia	Mr. Djani
Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
Peru	Mr. Popolizio Bardales
Poland	Ms. Wronecka
Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
South Africa	Mr. Mabhongo
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce

Agenda

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

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

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

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

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

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

I now give the floor to Mr. Khiari.

Mr. Khiari: There have been troubling developments in recent months related to the nuclear-weapon and ballistic-missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The first relates to resumed missile testing by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The launch of two missiles on 28 November marked the thirteenth time this year that the country has launched ballistic missiles or other projectiles. More recently, on 7 December, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced what it referred to as an "important test" at the Sohae Satellite Launching Ground, located on its west coast, that would help to change the "strategic position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea once again in the near future". Some experts believe that the word "strategic" refers to the country's nuclear-weapon capability. Analysts have reported signs that a rocket engine test had been conducted at the site within the past few days.

Through its State media, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has announced the testing of various new missile systems this year, including systems it has referred to as "multiple-launch rocket systems" and a new land-based short-range ballistic missile and a submarine-launched ballistic missile.

As is well known, Security Council resolutions, most recently resolution 2397 (2017) of 22 December 2017, prohibit the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from, inter alia, conducting any further launches that use ballistic missile technology. Furthermore, according to the information available to the United Nations, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea did not issue any airspace or maritime safety notifications.

The second development relates to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's ongoing suspension of diplomatic engagements. The country has yet to resume working-level talks with the United States, intra-Korean contacts have stalled and the country is forgoing some of its other international engagements.

The third development relates to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's warning of a new path. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has set a new policy — that it will not discuss denuclearization unless the so-called hostile policy of the United States is removed. It has set a year-end deadline for the United States to come up with a bold proposal agreeable to Pyongyang and warned that it would otherwise take a new path.

While it is unclear what the new path may entail, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stated, on 30 November, that we may see what a "real ballistic missile is in the not distant future". In terms of timing, the Central Committee of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea will hold a plenary meeting in the latter half of December to

"discuss and decide on crucial issues in line with the needs of the development of the Korean revolution and the changed situation at home and abroad".

Previous sessions of the Central Committee have seen the ruling party prepare for major announcements.

The Secretary-General is very concerned by the latest developments on the Korean peninsula. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's reference to launching ballistic missiles and its threat of potentially taking a so-called new path in the coming weeks are deeply troubling. The Secretary-General is reiterating his call on the leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply fully with its international obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions, resume working-level talks with the United States and work for peace and stability.

On 15 December 2017, the Secretary-General described the situation on the Korean peninsula as “the most tense and dangerous peace and security issue in the world” (*S/PV.8137, p. 2*). Significant progress was made in 2018 towards building trust, reducing the risk of war and opening channels of communication. The summits involving the leaders of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea and the United States, respectively, gave rise to the hope that it is possible to build an atmosphere conducive to advancing sustainable peace and complete and verifiable denuclearization on the Korean peninsula.

Today, however, as I have already mentioned, talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States, as well as between the two Koreas, have stalled. The Secretary-General calls on the parties to continue what they have started. It will require perseverance, political courage and painstaking diplomacy. He urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States to resume talks. Diplomacy can continue to reduce tensions that could otherwise set events on an unpredictable trajectory. The Secretary-General calls for the international community to support the parties in their endeavours and to ensure the full implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions. The unity of the Security Council remains essential for achieving the goal of complete and verifiable denuclearization and creates the space for diplomatic initiatives to that end.

I would like to close by noting that a breakdown in diplomacy will not help the human rights or humanitarian situations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Meeting the population's basic needs of food and access to essential health services, clean water and adequate sanitation is a humanitarian imperative but also a basic human right. While the primary responsibility to meet these needs lies with the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — as is the case for any Government towards its people — the Secretariat has consistently stressed the humanitarian imperative to provide humanitarian assistance when the basic needs of the population are not being met.

International humanitarian operations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remain critical for over 10 million people, or approximately 40 per cent of the population. The Secretariat recalls that the measures imposed by the Security Council are not intended to negatively affect or restrict food aid and

humanitarian assistance that are not prohibited by relevant Security Council resolutions. The Secretariat is encouraged by the adoption by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) of Implementation Assistance Notice No.7 in August 2018, which provides guidelines for obtaining the exemptions necessary to facilitate humanitarian assistance in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as improvements in the rates and timeliness of exemption approvals.

Addressing the humanitarian needs in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea requires an integrated response — for example, by addressing water, sanitation and hygiene to also improve health and nutrition — in order to be effective, save lives and prevent further suffering. I urge all Member States to fund lifesaving humanitarian operations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Some \$120 million are required to address the critical humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable 3.8 million people in 2019. A gap of \$87 million remains.

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

I would like to draw the attention of speakers to paragraph 22 of presidential note S/2017/507, which encourages all participants in Council meetings to deliver their statements in five minutes or less, in line with the Security Council's commitment to making more effective use of open meetings.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States.

Because of the increasingly troubling situation on the Korean peninsula, the United States convened today's meeting of the Security Council. We must address this issue in a comprehensive manner.

Over the past year and a half, the United States has sought to engage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a sustained negotiating process intended to bring lasting peace to all people of the Korean peninsula, as well as safety and security to the surrounding region. The process to achieve this vision, as President Trump and Chairman Kim agreed to in Singapore, would advance by replacing decades of acrimony with trust, working towards genuine and lasting peace, achieving the complete denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and healing the lingering wounds of war that date back nearly 70 years.

We have said many times before that we remain ready to engage in this comprehensive process. We remain ready to take actions in parallel and to simultaneously take concrete steps toward this agreement. We are prepared to be flexible in how we approach this manner and we recognize the need for a balanced agreement that addresses the concerns of all the parties. But we cannot do this alone — North Korea must make this difficult but bold decision to work with us.

However, we have seen deeply troubling indications that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is headed in a different direction. The reason for today's meeting, as we have discussed several times, is that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has launched more than two dozen ballistic missiles just this year. Those ballistic missile tests, no matter their range, undermine regional security and stability and are in clear violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. These actions also risk closing the door on this opportunity to find a better way for the future. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has threatened to take a new path in the coming weeks and has used its public statements to hint at a resumption of serious provocations. In practical terms, this would mean that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea could launch space vehicles using long-range ballistic-missile technology or that it could even test launch intercontinental ballistic missiles, which are designed to attack the continental United States with nuclear weapons.

Let me be clear — the United States and the Security Council have a goal, not a deadline. We have outlined this goal in detail in a series of unanimously adopted Security Council resolutions. We want to use this timely briefing to make it crystal clear to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that its continued ballistic-missile testing is deeply counterproductive to the shared objectives that President Trump and Chairman Kim have discussed on two occasions. Missile and nuclear testing will not bring the Democratic People's Republic of Korea greater security. It will not bring the Democratic People's Republic of Korea or the region greater stability. It will not help the Democratic People's Republic of Korea achieve the economic opportunities it seeks; in fact, it will do the opposite, complicating our ability to negotiated agreement that would positively address the Democratic People's Republic of Korea security and economic goals and improve regional stability.

We hope that we do not find ourselves at an inflection point in the near future. We trust that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will turn away from further hostility and threats and, instead, make a bold decision to engage with all of us. If events prove otherwise, we as the Security Council must all be prepared to act accordingly.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now give the floor to the other Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China (*spoke in Chinese*)): We listened closely to Assistant Secretary-General Khiari's briefing.

Since early 2018, thanks to the concerted efforts of the parties concerned, there have been positive changes in the situation on the Korean peninsula and the issue of the peninsula has been steered back on track towards a negotiated solution through dialogue. Earlier this year, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States held meetings between their leaders in Hanoi and Panmunjom, as well as working-level consultations in Stockholm, which are positive step towards greater mutual understanding between the two parties.

At the same time, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has honoured its promise to suspend nuclear tests and the test launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles and has declared on multiple occasions its commitment to the denuclearization of the peninsula. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States, as the principal parties to the peninsula issue, should cherish the hard-won relaxation of the situation on the peninsula, achieved through dialogue, and work together by taking practical measures to achieve the denuclearization of and lasting peace on the Korean peninsula.

The situation on the Korean peninsula has recently taken another turn, leading to renewed tension between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States and bringing the situation on the peninsula once again to a critical juncture. China notes that, on 7 September, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted a test and made a related public statement. So far, the details of the test, what it involved and other specific information have yet to be

established. The Security Council should therefore not jump to hasty conclusions.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has taken a series of positive steps towards denuclearization, but its legitimate concerns and aspirations with regard to security and development have not been given the attention they deserve and remain unanswered. That is one significant reason explaining the current deadlock in dialogue and increasing tensions related to the situation. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea and especially the United States should take advantage of the hard-won window of opportunity, take on board and respect one another's stances in good faith, demonstrate genuine flexibility and good will, act on the consensus reflected in the Singapore joint statement and, by taking a phased and synchronized approach, break the deadlock and resume dialogue and engagement as soon as possible so as to prevent the dialogue process from derailing or reversing course.

The international community, in particular the main parties to the peninsula issue, must take an objective and impartial position, act in the service of long-term interests and the greater good, and make additional efforts contributing to the relaxation of tensions in the dialogue and consultations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the political process on the peninsula so as to avoid plunging the region into tensions and confrontations.

The Security Council's resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should be comprehensively, completely and accurately implemented. Sanctions are only a means to an end, not an end in and of themselves. Enforcing sanctions is required by the relevant Council resolutions. Pushing for a political solution is also required by the relevant Council resolutions. Currently, there is a greater sense of urgency to find a political settlement to the issue on the peninsula.

Advancing the denuclearization of the peninsula in parallel with establishing a peace mechanism on the peninsula, is the only realistic and feasible way to solve the issue politically. It is the Security Council's important responsibility to maintain peace and stability on the peninsula and move the denuclearization process forward. In the current context, the top priority is to maintain the international consensus and momentum to reach a political solution to the peninsula issue, support and urge the United States and the Democratic People's

Republic of Korea to meet one another half way and do everything we can to head off a dramatic reversal of the peninsula situation.

It is imperative that the Council take action and invoke the reversible provisions in resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as soon as possible in the light of the evolving situation on the peninsula and make the necessary adjustments to the sanctions measures stipulated by those resolutions, especially in areas where the livelihood of the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is at stake. That is in keeping with the spirit of the resolutions, which are conducive to easing the humanitarian and livelihood-related situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, creating a favourable environment for dialogue, encouraging the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take greater strides towards denuclearization and creating the necessary conditions for and impetus to a political settlement of the situation on the peninsula.

China has been consistent in its commitment to the denuclearization of the peninsula, the maintenance of peace and stability there and the settlement of all issues through dialogue and consultations. Approaching the matter responsibly, China has played a constructive role by maintaining close communication and coordination with the parties concerned and encouraging peace talks between them. With regard to implementing the Security Council's resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, China has unfailingly and conscientiously fulfilled its international obligations and sustained huge losses and tremendous pressure in the process of implementing the relevant sanctions.

China maintains that the Security Council sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should not negatively affect humanitarian activities. China calls on the Security Council to remain united, discharge its historical responsibility and speak unequivocally with one voice in support of a political solution. China stands ready to continue working together with all parties concerned towards the peninsula's denuclearization and achieving lasting peace and stability there.

Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): The Security Council has been working for years on the North Korean nuclear issue and, for years, the threat has continued to increase and worsen. The risks are not only real and empirical, but also extremely high

and growing. As we meet here, the nuclear programme continues to advance and fissile material continues to be produced.

We fully share the concern voiced with regard to North Korean provocations, in particular the 13 incidents in which some 20 ballistic missiles have been launched over the past months. Those launches demonstrate North Korea's willingness to develop its missile arsenal. They violate our decisions, which clearly prohibit North Korea from using ballistic technologies. They undermine regional stability and security and international peace and security. They erode our trust and make us doubt the sincerity of the regime's willingness to negotiate.

North Korea has continued to develop its nuclear and ballistic capabilities. Despite what we may have heard, it has decidedly taken no measures in the opposite direction. Sites linked to its illegal programmes remain operational and active. The test on 7 December shows not only that the regime plans to continue its provocations in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, but also that it is not respecting its own commitments, as Kim Jong Un had previously announced that the Tongchang-ri site, where that test took place, would be dismantled, at the inter-Korean summit held in Pyongyang in September 2018.

In that regard, we must remain both sober and vigilant with regard to the situation. Our approach to the issue must be firm, clear and unambiguous. I recall that the strict and full implementation of the decisions of the Security Council and, through it, of the international community, is a collective obligation. It must be self-evident to us all. The regime has methodically pursued its efforts to circumvent the sanctions and avoid the consequences of disregarding our decisions, whether concerning the presence of workers sent by the regime abroad or the illegal shipments of petroleum products and coal. The Panel of Experts regularly reports to us on its findings involving the many violations observed.

Sanctions are not a goal in and of themselves. They serve our common goal of achieving the denuclearization of North Korea. The situation does not justify lifting them or scaling down their level of implementation. We must also be prepared to respond firmly to any challenge to our decisions and authority by the North Korean regime. North Korea is undergoing a dire humanitarian crisis. The sanctions imposed by the Council include exemptions with regard to the latter,

and they are being applied. But it must be made very clear that responsibility for the humanitarian crisis falls squarely on the regime. Instead of devoting the major part of its resources to the development of nuclear and ballistic-missile programmes and threatening international peace and security, the Pyongyang authorities should feed their people.

The door to dialogue with Pyongyang remains open. We are extending a hand. We support and welcome the efforts made by the United States over the past two years to initiate negotiations. What we now expect are concrete gestures of commitment from North Korea, which must refrain from any provocations. It should comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions and embark swiftly and in good faith on a process of complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization. That is the only possible way to achieve a political solution and lasting peace on the Korean peninsula.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): We are gathered here today in the name of prevention. International peace and security are under threat, owing to North Korea's unabated development of ballistic-missile and nuclear-weapon technology. Despite concerted good-faith efforts by the United States to negotiate a solution, this year has seen 13 sets of illegal ballistic-missile tests. We are therefore also gathered here today to send a message to Pyongyang that it is not too late. It can prevent the situation from worsening and should seize this diplomatic opportunity, which has already been repeated in this Council meeting. The expressed and united will of the Security Council is that North Korea should begin the process of complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization, and the United Kingdom will continue to work with international partners to support that goal.

What is at stake bears repeating. As the Permanent Representative of China said, this is truly and quintessentially a matter for the Security Council, and of all international bodies, only the Security Council can really deal with such a challenge deriving from weapons of mass destruction and proliferation. It is a vital issue. It is hard to discern what lies behind North Korea's provocative and dangerous moves. It has tested three different types of short-range ballistic missiles since May, and the tests have demonstrated that its illegal and reckless weapons programme has made substantial progress. As other representatives have said, each test is a violation of Security Council resolutions, and the Council should support the rigorous enforcement

of its sanctions in the face of such violations. At this point, I also want to wholeheartedly endorse what the representative of France said about the humanitarian angle.

The sanctions regime imposed by the Council will remain in place until North Korea takes concrete steps towards denuclearization. Further breaches of Security Council resolutions, whether with ballistic-missile launches, space launch vehicles or nuclear tests, will only harden the Council's resolve. And there are further implications of the possession of such weapons. It is in no Member State's interest to see North Korean technology and expertise proliferate across borders. With the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons coming up, next year will be a very important moment to resolve this issue.

We should not forget the suffering of the North Korean people. The human rights situation in North Korea is disturbing. It is the worst offender on the Global Slavery Index and is ranked 179th out of 180 in the Reporters without Borders World Press Freedom Index. The role of human rights in this issue is critical, and we urge North Korea to concentrate on improving the lives of its most vulnerable people.

All States have an obligation to enforce the Council's sanctions. We urge action to address the continued reports of fuel shipments to North Korea in violation of the mandated annual import cap, and we urge vigilance regarding North Korea's illegal fundraising activity, including its use of cyberattacks. Lastly, if I may, Madam President, we would like to remind States that all North Korean overseas workers earning an income should be repatriated by 22 December this year.

Our message as a Council must be united, and it is a clear one. The continued development of programmes in violation of Security Council resolutions will not be tolerated. We urge North Korea to change course, engage in meaningful negotiations with the United States and begin a process of complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Many of those who have spoken before me today mentioned the role of the Security Council. We see today's meeting as an opportunity to review the results of the Council's action over the past two years in implementing its own decisions in its quest to find a political and diplomatic solution to the knotty problems

of the Korean peninsula. Unfortunately, there is almost nothing to discuss, since for the past two years the Council has been able to agree on any specific steps. Ever since a glimmer of progress emerged in the dialogue between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and in the inter-Korean reconciliation efforts, Russia, China and other Security Council members have often tried to initiate some kind of positive response on the part of the Security Council to the events that have occurred. I want to remind members that only last year we were talking about the prospects for concluding the long-awaited peace agreement and about rapprochement between South and North Korea. However, for reasons that are difficult to understand, any kind of response on the part of the Council in support of that positive momentum towards a settlement has been blocked.

Meanwhile, the inter-Korean dialogue has come to nothing, and the dialogue between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is stagnating. Sanctions cannot replace diplomacy, and a negotiation process is a two-way street. It is impossible to get an agreement without offering anything in return. No one is questioning the fact that the existence of a nuclear-missile programme in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is unacceptable. However, how can we expect progress when Pyongyang is called on to meet all the proposed requirements unconditionally in return for only a promise of future benefits?

We have often said that the path to denuclearization — and not only for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, incidentally, but for the entire Korean peninsula — should begin with strengthened confidence-building measures. The institutions and mechanisms of the United Nations and its Security Council should act in support of the processes for a settlement and for inter-Korean dialogue rather than becoming an obstacle to them. Only then will it be possible to talk about an effective solution to the accumulated problems in the region, including the nuclear issue, on a basis of dialogue and mutually acceptable arrangements. It is impossible to achieve that through sanctions and pressure alone. It is also essential to have a road map for the gradual lifting of restrictions. The Council's excessive use of sanctions is already one of the reasons why Member States and international organizations, including the United Nations itself, have frequently been unable to maintain normal humanitarian, diplomatic and sporting ties

with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that have nothing to do with its development of nuclear and missile programmes.

The so-called autonomous or secondary sanctions that go around or over Security Council sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and other States do their own share of damage. Unilateral restrictions not only undermine the sovereignty and lawful interests of Member States and are in breach of the norms and rules of international trade, but also undermine the integrity of sanctions agreed through the Security Council. We once again call on the United States and other States to stop using unilateral restrictions. The example of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is very revealing in that regard. Even things that are not prohibited under the Security Council sanctions regime are extremely difficult to implement thanks to these illegal practices and enterprises' fears of ending up on banned lists. Attempts to whitewash such restrictions by invoking the authority of the Security Council and its Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) are unacceptable.

We would also like to point out that every Security Council resolution on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea contains provisions on measures for arriving at a political and diplomatic settlement of the situation on the Korean peninsula as well as a sanctions component. That is a joint decision of the Council. Ignoring those provisions is equivalent to non-compliance with the consensus agreements arrived at in the Security Council. We have often said that the Council and its 1718 Committee should contribute as much as possible to finding political and diplomatic solutions to the problems of the Korean peninsula and establishing a multilateral security mechanism in North-East Asia. Furthermore, the Security Council's own resolutions oblige it to regularly assess the advisability of reviewing any of the restrictions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as it makes progress towards renouncing its nuclear weapons.

To sum up, the positive momentum that emerged in 2018 in inter-Korean relations did not elicit any response from the Council. The expectations for positive movement in the efforts for a settlement on the Korean peninsula were disappointed. With the aim of emerging from the stalemate, Russia and China have proposed a viable road map towards denuclearization and the normalization of relations that takes into consideration the existing security guarantees for States throughout

North-East Asia and phased efforts to achieve those aims based on action in exchange for action. All that is needed to accomplish it is political will. It is important that we encourage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to cooperate by responding to what it has already done in the expectation of a positive reaction on our part.

We call on all the parties to act with restraint and resume the dialogue between Washington and Pyongyang. We want to emphasize once again that the quest for mutually acceptable political and diplomatic solutions is the only possible path to a peaceful resolution of the problems of the Korean peninsula and the creation of enduring security mechanisms in North-East Asia, which is in the interests of all the countries of the region and the international community as a whole. To that end, we believe that the time has come for the Council to adopt a political resolution on the situation on the Korean peninsula. Russia has always been ready to cooperate closely with all the parties involved in order to ensure peace and stability in the region and to achieve a comprehensive solution to the problems of the Korean peninsula.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank the United States for convening this briefing. We also thank Mr. Khiari for his report this afternoon.

We would first like to stress that the nuclear and ballistic-missile programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea poses a serious threat to international peace and security, in flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions, the non-proliferation regime and international law. We are very concerned about the fact that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has continued actively developing and improving its nuclear and ballistic-missile programme, which we see as a challenge to the international community compounded by its nuclear deterrent effect and defiant attitude. In addition to violating stipulated provisions, this has created an atmosphere of uncertainty both regionally and internationally. Considering that, it is clear that the discussion of this issue is a very important one that should continue to be a priority on the Council's agenda.

On the other hand, we want to emphasize that last year's political and diplomatic advances between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States and the rapprochement between the two Koreas

were important steps in establishing relations, reducing tensions and building confidence, which we commend. However, these positive events nonetheless failed to result in concrete progress towards the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We also regret that since May Pyongyang has actively resumed its ballistic-missile tests, including of submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and is working on the possibility of a space launch and intercontinental missiles. A single mistake or mechanical failure in those tests would have devastating and unimaginable consequences for humankind. We therefore categorically condemn these launches and all the destabilizing activity in the region and urge the authorities to show restraint, refrain from aggressive and defiant rhetoric and return to a dialogue that facilitates meaningful negotiations on denuclearization.

We also note with concern the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's continued violations of the provisions of its sanctions regime, including its continuing illicit ship-to-ship transfers, which are a clear evasion of the annual import limit of 500,000 barrels of refined oil established by Council resolution 2397 (2017). We are also concerned about the diversion of national resources to the country's nuclear and ballistic programme and its acquisition of new technologies enabling it to expand its armaments capacity while at the same time worsening its current critical humanitarian situation. It is therefore crucial to make greater efforts to ensure full compliance with the Council's resolutions. We hope that the talks between Washington and Pyongyang will resume and will facilitate an immediate halt to all destabilizing activity on the Korean peninsula, including ballistic-missile launches, regardless of their range, while an agreement is being negotiated for complete, irreversible and verifiable denuclearization under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

In conclusion, we reiterate our call for unity on the part of the Council, which we see as the primary actor in the proceedings for taking diplomatic initiatives and resuming dialogue with a view to achieving our overall goal of ensuring lasting peace and the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Khaled Mohamed Khiri for his briefing.

We are gravely concerned about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's announcements that it is stepping back from its denuclearization talks, as well as about its threats to continue missile launches in the future. Its provocations are aggravating the already fragile security situation on the Korean peninsula and in the region and are in clear violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, which require the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from conducting any further nuclear tests and launching ballistic missiles, suspend all activities related to its ballistic-missile programme and in that context re-establish its previous commitment to a moratorium on missile launches. We therefore urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from further provocations and take concrete steps towards abandoning its nuclear and ballistic programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. We believe that the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization can play a significant role in that process.

Until a sustainable solution to the problem of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear and ballistic programme is achieved, United Nations sanctions must continue to be thoroughly implemented by all Member States. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's ongoing sophisticated sanctions evasion tactics are upsetting.

In that context, the unity of the Security Council and the entire international community in further reinforcing the full implementation of sanctions is essential. At the same time, we reiterate our position that sanctions are only an instrument to bring the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the negotiating table and persuade it to return to compliance with its international obligations and the law. It is the responsibility of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respond to the basic needs of its people instead of channelling its resources to build up military programmes, most of which are illegal. Consequently, the situation for the citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will remain grim as long as the authorities continue to follow that path.

To conclude, there is no way to achieve security and sustainable peace, economic development or the well-being of people on the Korean peninsula other than through meaningful negotiations. We therefore call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to

return in good faith and without further delay to the negotiation talks.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): Allow me to thank you, Madam President, for convening this meeting. I would also like to thank our colleague, Assistant Secretary-General Khiari, for his briefing.

We believe that our objective remains the same. We seek the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, as well as lasting peace, stability and prosperity. If we are to obtain those objectives, we cannot backtrack on what we have achieved so far. We should avoid all matters that would hinder progress. In that regard, allow me to make three points.

First, while we express our concern about the recurrence of missile testing, Indonesia continues to support the resolution of issues through dialogue and negotiations as the only way forward. That includes the full and expeditious implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration on Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea-United States Joint Statement, and the Pyongyang Joint Declaration. We also urge the two parties to fulfil their stated commitments, including those on complete denuclearization. We support the recent rounds of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea-United States dialogue and view the technical-level dialogue that took place between them last October as an important milestone. Continued dialogue will bring the parties closer to resolving the issues. It is not an instant process, and we should not be discouraged if the first round of negotiations did not yield a concrete result. Persistence and patience are required. We are following the developments closely and urge the two parties to resume their next round of negotiations.

Secondly, we reiterate our call on all parties to exercise the utmost restraint. This is not a time to point fingers. Everyone has the same responsibility to exercise self-restraint and persevere to build mutual confidence. We commend the relevant parties that have demonstrated efforts to exercise restraint. We urge for that to continue in order to create stability and an atmosphere conducive to dialogue. We must not forget that self-restraint will contribute positively to the stability of the region, which is also important to trade and other economic activities.

Thirdly, as responsible members of the international community, we must also not forget our overarching obligations on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Indonesia underscores the need to take concrete measures to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons and their means of delivery without further delay. As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, as an ardent supporter of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and as the coordinator of the working group on disarmament of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Indonesia continues to stand determinedly for a world without any nuclear weapons. We look forward to the roles of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in the denuclearization verification process and in advancing the possibility of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea returning to the fold of the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State.

As a voice from the Asia-Pacific region, let me conclude by reiterating that our common goal should be to achieve lasting peace, stability and prosperity in the region and beyond. Let us work together to achieve those goals. We owe that to the people of the Korean peninsula, of Asia and of the entire world. Let us build trust, confidence and an environment conducive to generating political solutions and dialogue. The Council should be united in sending the message to all parties to continue dialogue.

Mr. Adom (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first to convey my delegation's sincere condolences to the people and the Government of the Niger following the attack last night on a military base in Inates that killed 70 soldiers. Our thoughts go out to the families that are in mourning.

I would also like to commend Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari for his very informative briefing.

As all those who have spoken before me have stated, the security situation on the Korean peninsula remains a source of concern for the international community. While the inter-Korean summits and, in particular, the dialogue between the leaders of the United States and of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea raised a great deal of hope, the talks concerning the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have stalled. In addition,

since April, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has continuously tested new types of so-called tactical weapons and multiple short-range ballistic missile launches, in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and air safety regulations. Côte d'Ivoire clearly condemns those repeated military exercises, which constitute serious breaches of international security and undermine the efforts of the international community to ensure peace and a peaceful coexistence among the countries of the region.

In the face of the threat that this situation poses to international peace and security, Côte d'Ivoire urges the North Korean authorities to exercise restraint and to refrain from any action that could jeopardize future talks. We also urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with its obligations, as mandated in the relevant Security Council resolutions, and to resume its negotiations with the United States as soon as possible. My country also calls on all stakeholders involved in the North Korean nuclear issue to play their roles by making every possible effort to bring the Democratic People's Republic of Korea back to the negotiating table and increase mutual confidence-building measures. In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire commends the United States for postponing its joint military air exercises with South Korea last month with a view to creating an opportunity to resume the talks. We urge the United States to maintain its offer of dialogue with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea so that the parties may resolve all the points of divergence that were identified at the meetings in Hanoi and Stockholm. We also encourage the Republic of Korea to preserve the achievements of the inter-Korean dialogue as a guarantee of peace and stability in the region.

In order to achieve the ultimate objective of the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, it is imperative that the Security Council maintain the unity it demonstrated in its adoption of resolution 2397 (2017) and previous resolutions. That will enable it to speak with one voice and bring all its weight to bear to achieve a swift and definitive resolution to this crisis, which carries alarming humanitarian consequences. In the same vein, it is the duty of the Council to act in perfect unity on the North Korean issue in backing and supporting any rapprochement process on the Korean peninsula that could serve as a tool to build the confidence needed to achieve lasting peace.

Côte d'Ivoire takes this opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to the international non-proliferation

architecture, which is an essential tool for the maintenance of international peace and security. We therefore hope that our call for dialogue with North Korea towards the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula will be heard. The people of the Korean peninsula, who have contributed so much to humankind through their cultural richness, ingenuity and hard work, deserve more than the endless tensions and ongoing threat of a military confrontation with potentially disastrous consequences.

Mr. Popolizio Bardales (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the convening of this meeting and the informative briefing by Assistant Secretary-General Mohamed Khaled Khiri.

We would like to begin by expressing our strongest condemnation of the recent ballistic missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which not only are provocative and a serious threat to international peace and security but also highlight the clear contempt of North Korea's Government for international law, the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the relevant resolutions of the Council.

We are concerned that such actions, which affirm North Korea's intention to continue developing and improving the scope and sophistication of the capacities of these programmes, will be accompanied by new threats in exchange for significant concessions to be met before the end of this year. All that illustrates a scenario that is not very promising for the negotiating process, whose ultimate objective is the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

In that regard, we reaffirm the importance of keeping the channels for frank dialogue open, beginning with the resumption of talks with the United States, with a view to reaching a political settlement. To that end, it is essential to maintain the unity of the Council around that objective.

We reiterate that the North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, including related activities, must be abandoned in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. Until that happens, the sanctions imposed by the Council must remain in force and be universally implemented, which requires the proactive efforts of Member States.

In that context, we are concerned about the lack of monitoring regarding compliance with those sanctions,

especially those related to transfers of refined petroleum products to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. It is alarming that such transfers have increased in scope, scale and sophistication.

We urge all States to exercise greater vigilance against the illicit transfers expressly prohibited under paragraph 11 of resolution 2375 (2017). We believe that the existence of this sanctions regime, which takes into account the humanitarian situation in the country, is useful in fostering a positive climate for negotiations that will make it possible to denuclearize the peninsula and, at the same time, deal with one of the most serious threats to international peace and security today.

Mrs. Van Vlierberge (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): First of all, allow me to thank you, Madam President, for convening this briefing on an issue that is currently of vital importance to international peace and security. I also warmly thank Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari for his informative briefing. The Council is once again frequently called on to consider the issue of ballistic missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which are also a challenge to the international community. Belgium expresses its deep concern at these repeated launches and at the ongoing diplomatic impasse. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the launches, which are in flagrant violation of the Council's resolutions. We also regret the bluster and threatening rhetoric of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. They are unacceptable provocations while a resumption of negotiations is still on the table.

Given that gloomy picture, Belgium calls for the unity of the Council in pursuing its objective, namely, establishing lasting peace on the peninsula, which requires the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of the nuclear and ballistic programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. To that end, the sanctions must be fully implemented by all.

In particular, Belgium calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to proactively and specifically move towards denuclearization, as it has undertaken to do, and to resume bilateral negotiations in good faith. We therefore call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to show restraint and de-escalate tensions. Provocative missile launches must stop, as must bellicose rhetoric. Dialogue must be resumed as soon as possible. Belgium places particular emphasis on the following points. We ultimately believe that the denuclearization

of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should be part of the broader multilateral nuclear non-proliferation regime as soon as possible, with the country's return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and accession to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Of course, the Council must also assume its responsibilities. In particular, it must mitigate, as far as possible, the negative humanitarian impact of the sanctions regime in place against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Access to the country for United Nations agencies and humanitarian organizations must be facilitated. That is why we are working, with our partners in the Council, to improve the system of exemptions from sanctions on humanitarian grounds. Finally, Belgium is concerned about the recent report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (see A/74/275/Rev.1), which describes a situation on the ground that is still a catastrophe in terms of the oppression of fundamental freedoms and human rights violations.

This year end will have seen a resurgence of tensions regarding the North Korean issue and, despite our differences, the Council must remain united in the way forward towards our common goal: the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Belgium therefore calls on the Council, and more broadly the diplomatic stakeholders, to continue to work for a rapid and favourable way out of the crisis for all.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening this meeting. I also thank Assistant Secretary-General Mohamed Khaled Khiari for his valuable briefing.

The situation on the Korean peninsula is one of the most long-standing, dangerous and fragile issues on the agenda of the Security Council. Only two years ago, we followed with great concern the heightened tensions on the Korean peninsula and the risk of a military escalation in the region following nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches by North Korea in clear violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. However, the initiative of the United States and countries of the region in choosing a path of direct dialogue has borne out and led to the convening of presidential summits

and subsequent agreements, which were endorsed by the State of Kuwait and the entire international community. Those agreements contributed to defusing the military confrontation and reducing tension on the Korean peninsula in order to reach the desired goal of the denuclearization of the region in a verifiable and irreversible manner and to achieve comprehensive and lasting peace between the two Koreas.

It is also important to underline that those diplomatic initiatives coincided with a series of international resolutions adopted by the Council. The cohesion and unity of the Council have played a leading role in condemning all North Korea's illicit programmes, be they related to nuclear or ballistic missiles. It is of the utmost importance for the Council to remain united, firm and resolute towards the full implementation of all its relevant resolutions, while taking into account the humanitarian situation and ensuring that humanitarian aid provided by the relevant international agencies reaches those who need it.

Despite the optimistic climate over the past year, such optimism has rapidly started to dissipate, threatening to overturn any progress on the Korean peninsula. We have begun to see talks grind to a halt and a return to ballistic missile launches, accompanied most recently by inflammatory statements, including threats of conducting further provocative missile attacks that would jeopardize regional and international peace and security. Those threats led us to hold a number of closed meetings and to convene today's to consider how to deal with the current situation on the Korean peninsula.

In conclusion, the State of Kuwait believes that dialogue is the best way to address this issue. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the negotiating table to resume direct talks with a view to reaching a peaceful solution to the crisis surrounding the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and establishing sustainable peace on the Korean peninsula. At the same time, we stress the need for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully comply with all its international obligations in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. It must also dispose of its nuclear weapons, abandon its illicit programmes and return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon State.

Mr. Mabhongo (South Africa): First, let me thank Assistant Secretary-General Mohamed Khaled Khiari for his briefing on developments in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. My intervention this afternoon will focus on denuclearization and the humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

On the issue of the denuclearization, South Africa welcomes the meetings that have been held between the leaders of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States. We encourage the parties to continue on that path in order for peace to prevail on the Korean peninsula. The hosting of the three inter-Korean summits, paving the way for the normalization of relations between South Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as the joint projects and enhanced people-to-people activities that have taken place in the past year, need to be encouraged to continue in order to strengthen the peace track.

Despite the setback following the unsuccessful outcome of the working-level meeting held in Sweden in October, we join others in expressing our delegation's support for a negotiated solution that addresses the issue of the Korean peninsula in a holistic manner. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fulfil its commitments, including those taken under the Six-Party Talks. It is only through dialogue that seemingly intractable disputes such as these can be resolved. It is therefore important that the Council continue supporting the dialogue on the Korean peninsula. South Africa calls upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to pursue a path towards the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, rejoin the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and fulfil its safeguards obligations to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

With regard to Security Council sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, South Africa wishes to reiterate our view that all sanctions against the country should be implemented in a balanced manner, including the four pillars as outlined in resolution 2397 (2017), namely, support for the political process on the Korean peninsula; the implementation of all sectorial sanctions, travel bans and assets freezes; and, last, but not least, humanitarian exemptions.

We would like to urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully implement its obligations under the various resolutions of the Security Council.

We join other Council members in expressing our deep concerns about the dire humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and wish to remind the Council that resolution 2397 (2017) empowers it to exempt, on a case-by-case basis, the provision of humanitarian assistance and other economic activities and cooperation to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We call on the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) to avoid any delays to such approvals so as not to negatively affect the provision of humanitarian assistance to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

In conclusion, South Africa calls upon all stakeholders involved to refrain from any action that might undermine the pursuit of a negotiated solution on the Korean peninsula, increase tensions or disturb the peace process that is emerging in the region.

Mrs. Mele Colifa (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Mohammed Khaled Khiari, for his detailed briefing to the Security Council. We also thank the delegation of the United States for convening this important and informative meeting.

We note with concern the information provided by Mr. Khiari, as well as notifications received previously by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006) and reports by the world media, on the latest ballistic missile launches conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Republic of Equatorial Guinea has been harbouring hope for the process of negotiations and dialogue held in Singapore, in Viet Nam and, finally, on the border between the two Koreas. We have always been quick to congratulate the United States, North Korea and South Korea on the detente process. However, in recent months it has unfortunately come to a standstill. From May onwards, the stalemate has led the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to resume its ballistic missile tests after a pause of over a year and a half.

In the light of the escalating nature of rhetoric among the actors directly involved in this issue as a result of the that impasse, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions. We also call on the United States to ensure that both countries resume the process of dialogue as soon as possible and ease tensions in the current

situation with a view to achieving peace on the Korean peninsula.

The Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea supports and recognizes the diplomatic efforts that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Government has undertaken thus far towards the peaceful denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We therefore encourage the country's authorities to return to the path of dialogue and reconciliation between the two Koreas and with the international community, primarily for the good of all Koreans — both from the North and the South — and to ensure peace on the Korean peninsula. None of the parties to the conflict should renounce dialogue, nor must they deprive the citizens of the Korean peninsula of the dream that, sooner rather than later, their situation of constant worry and concern will finally be resolved. One day, they will be able to sleep soundly, knowing that they will wake up free from the fear of a North-South war or nuclear extermination. Each party should recall its commitments to humankind and rectify the minor obstacles preventing the advancement of the process through dialogue towards a better world and a peaceful Korean peninsula.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea, given its traditional position regarding the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, condemns any State that may possess, produce, stockpile or carry out tests on such weapons. We therefore condemn the ballistic missile tests carried out in recent months by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In that connection, we wish to reiterate the imperative need for the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from further ballistic missile tests and return to the negotiating table, which the Government in Malabo would gladly host, should there be an interest.

Finally, we wish to draw the attention of the international community to the need to support the Government and the people of North Korea in addressing their urgent humanitarian needs.

Mr. Heusgen (Germany): In his very sober opening statement, Mr. Khiari quoted the Secretary-General, who described the situation on the Korean peninsula as “the most tense and dangerous peace and security issue in the world” (*S/PV.8137, p. 2*). I therefore welcome the fact that the President put this matter on the agenda. Many of us reminded one another of the fact that, in 2006, the Security Council decided that the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea must abandon its weapons of mass destruction and its ballistic missile programme. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has consistently disregarded its obligations. I would once again applaud the United States for the diplomatic efforts that it has undertaken to achieve what the Security Council demanded of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and we support all efforts to resume meaningful negotiations.

Despite all the recent efforts, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea resumed its ballistic missile launches on 19 May. I need not repeat all the different activities that were cited earlier by many. I found that perhaps the most worrying aspect of the situation was the recent public announcement by the regime of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that more provocations can be expected. We as the Council need to be prepared for that, and, as many said earlier, we have to preserve the unity of the Council.

Germany chairs the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006). For us, it is clear — and I repeat what the French Ambassador said earlier — that the sanctions are not a goal in and of themselves. As I listened to my Russian colleague earlier, I had the impression that the sanctions were at the origin of the miserable situation that the country is in and the tensions we are seeing. Once again, we should not confuse cause with effect. The sanctions can and should be lifted only when the Democratic People's Republic of Korea implements the relevant Security Council resolutions.

As Chair of the 1718 Committee, I would like to remind all United Nations Members that they are under obligation to repatriate to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea any of that country's nationals earning income within their States' jurisdiction. As I said, all Democratic People's Republic of Korea Government safety oversight attachés monitoring that country's workers abroad should be repatriated no later than 22 December, in line with resolution 2397 (2017).

Let me turn to the human rights situation. Yesterday we commemorated Human Rights Day. It was a very sad day for the North Koreans. They are being deprived by the regime of their basic civil and political rights — freedom of information, freedom of the press, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Those are all things that the people in North Korea can only dream of. The regime is also depriving

its people of their basic economic and social rights. Only by torturing and arbitrarily locking up of millions of people in a Gulag system can the regime quell the aspirations of its people. Those gross human rights violations, in our view, have an impact on peace and security and warrant the attention of this organ.

With regard to human rights issues, I would also like to raise the issue of foreign nationals abducted by, or on behalf of, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. That remains an unresolved international problem. I urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to finally return to the families their loved ones.

My last point concerning the humanitarian situation is the fact that it is a myth that the sanctions regime is at the root of the dire humanitarian situation. First of all, we swiftly process and approve all legitimate requests for humanitarian deliveries in the Sanctions Committee. But, as with the human rights situation, the same also holds true for the humanitarian situation. The North Korean regime is depriving its population of the essentials. Ten million people are undernourished. Just imagine what would happen if the regime stopped building missiles, equipping the military and giving money to the political elite, and, with that money, bought thousands of tons of rice, built medical facilities and schools and provided clean water to its population.

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

Any discussion of a new road map or Security Council draft resolution must bear in mind the reality that, over the past year and a half, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has continued to advance its prohibited programmes, tested its prohibited programmes and repeatedly refused to engage in sustained diplomatic engagement. We have not asked North Korea to do everything before we do anything.

The United States is prepared to be flexible in how it approaches this matter. We recognize the need for a balanced agreement and parallel actions that address the concerns of all parties. In fact, we have taken many steps to bring about a resolution through dialogue and have conveyed this message clearly to North Korea. But we need a committed negotiating partner to take the reciprocal actions required for progress. We are happy to consider ideas put forth by our counterparts that could advance the agreement that President Trump and

Chairman Kim agreed to in Singapore, and if they do, we can work together to achieve such an outcome.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

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

Mr. Cho Hyun (Republic of Korea): I thank you very much, Madam President, for convening this meeting and giving me an opportunity to speak to the Security Council on non-proliferation issues pertaining to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I also thank Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari for his comprehensive briefing.

The Republic of Korea has consistently pursued the Korean peninsula peace process to achieve complete denuclearization and lasting peace on the Korean peninsula. The process is at a critical juncture. Today's meeting could be helpful in taking stock of the progress made so far and consolidating our efforts towards achieving the shared goal.

Over the past two years, an unprecedented diplomatic endeavour involving strong commitment and determination from the highest political levels brought about a historic shift on the Korean peninsula. It started with the participation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's in the 2018 Pyeongchang Olympic Winter and Paralympic Games, which then led to three inter-Korean summits, two summits between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and a trilateral meeting in Panmunjeom, where the top leaders of the two Koreas and the United States agreed to work together to establish lasting peace on the Korean peninsula and achieve its complete denuclearization.

Since then, there have been a series of talks and negotiations to fulfil the commitments based on the Panmunjeom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula and the Pyongyang joint declaration of September 2018, as well as the broad agreement reached by the leaders of the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in Singapore. The negotiations have had their ups and downs, but, as has been rightly pointed out, a legacy of 70 years of war and hostility on the Korean peninsula cannot be overcome in a single day. We will need to pursue the delicate path of dialogue with perseverance

and focus, and every effort should be made to keep the momentum of the process going.

We are now, however, faced with the recent turn of events, which, if left unchecked, will have a negative effect on the historic process. My Government shares the concern of the international community about the repeated testing of missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fulfil its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions and to remain meaningfully engaged in dialogue with the United States and the Republic of Korea so that progress in negotiations can lead to concrete results.

The international community, for its part, must continue to work together to maintain the momentum for dialogue. While fully implementing relevant Security Council resolutions, the international community should also provide meaningful support, including humanitarian aid, for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to make the right decision.

The Government of the Republic of Korea firmly believes that dialogue and cooperation are the only possible way forward, regardless of the hurdles we face. For now, maintaining the hard-won momentum for dialogue should be our utmost priority. We will continue to work with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea under the principle that we will not allow a war on the Korean peninsula and will guarantee mutual security and seek co-prosperity, as spelled out in President Moon Jae-in's speech at the General Assembly this year (see A/74/PV.3).

The leaders of the two Koreas met in Pyongyang last year and agreed to turn the Korean peninsula into a land of peace, free from nuclear weapons and nuclear threats. To fulfil that commitment, dialogue between the two Koreas must be resumed. Genuine peace for all Koreans living on the peninsula cannot be achieved without improved inter-Korean relations. Our commitment to improving inter-Korean relations through exchange and cooperation projects remains unchanged. In his General Assembly speech, President Moon also proposed to transform the demilitarized zone into an international peace zone to serve as a physical guarantee of security between South and North Korea and provide a stable environment for continued, concerted denuclearization talks between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States.

Peace on the Korean peninsula is inextricably linked to peace around the world. We must seize this opportunity to break free from the trap of the security dilemma and the lingering fear of war and to establish lasting peace on the Korean peninsula. That will not be achieved by the projection of animosity and mistrust, which will only lead to a downward spiral of enmity and instability. It will be achieved through restraint, courage and faith in the future of a wholly peaceful, nuclear-free Korean peninsula and the great boost it will give to regional and global peace and prosperity. My Government is determined to stay the course. We count on the unwavering support of the Security Council and the international community in that endeavour.

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

Mr. Ishikane (Japan): I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation to Mr. Mohamed Khaled Khiari for his briefing. I would also like to commend the United States for this timely initiative to focus on denuclearization and ballistic missile launches by North Korea.

North Korea has launched more than 20 ballistic missiles this year. As a number of Council members have emphasized today, such launches, regardless of their ranges, are in violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. Japan believes that this is the right time for the Council to resume its discussion of those activities, which cannot be overlooked.

In the pursuit of upholding peace and security in the region and beyond, I cannot emphasize enough how extremely important it is to realize the dismantlement of all of North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner in accordance with the resolutions unanimously adopted by the Council. Japan continues to support United States efforts in that regard, including the diplomatic process between the United States and North Korea. As support for that process is critical, Japan finds it encouraging to hear today that all participants share a similar view. Japan

strongly hopes that the voices from this Chamber will be heard.

It should also be recalled that it is the obligation of all Member States to fully implement relevant Security Council resolutions. Japan believes that a unified effort by the international community will provide additional support for the diplomatic process to move forward.

The series of ballistic missile launches by North Korea are a serious challenge, not only to Japan but also to the entire international community. Those provocations have taken place while the United States has repeatedly called for the resumption of talks. It is important that the agreement of both leaders, including the commitment by North Korea towards the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, be fully and expeditiously implemented, as set out in the Joint Statement of the United States-North Korea summit meeting.

Japan seeks to normalize its relations with North Korea, in accordance with the Japan-Democratic People's Republic of Korea Pyongyang Declaration, by comprehensively resolving outstanding issues of concern, such as abductions, nuclear weapons and missiles, and finding a settlement to the unfortunate past. That policy remains unchanged. Prime Minister Abe has publicly stated his determination to meet Chairman Kim Jong Un face to face without any condition.

In conclusion, Japan continues to strongly urge North Korea to heed the messages from the Council. North Korea needs not only to refrain from further provocations in violation of Council resolutions, including launches that use ballistic missile technology, but also to take concrete action towards its denuclearization. Japan calls upon North Korea to choose a path to a bright future. Japan will continue to cooperate closely with the international community and hopes that the North Korean issue will continue to be appropriately addressed by the Council.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.