

Research Report

Security Council
Korean Peninsula

MUNISH '11



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Forum	Security Council
Issue:	Korean Peninsula
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Introduction

Conflict in the Korean Peninsula is one that has a very deep rooted past. Although the Korean War ended in 1953 there are many events that show that the issue is far from being resolved. The two nations have been in conflict since their division in 1945. The conflict between the two is political, social, and violent. However the issue of the peninsula is not only limited to the conflict between the two nations, in the Korean war and even now international participations. The issue is only fueled by the secrecy of North Korea, which for a long time has been regarded as a shut off nation with almost no allowance of foreign media. This unknown factor is very prominent in the debate over the presence of nuclear weapons in North Korea. Given the internationalism of this conflict nuclear weapons could be devastating for many nations and the uncertainty of what actions the North Korean government may take only makes that threat even more powerful.

Definition of Key Terms

38th Parallel – the line by which North and South Korea are divided, established by the United States and the Soviet Union in 1945. In 1953 after the Korean War a Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) was established by the United Nations surrounding the border in which forces from both sides are not allowed to enter, the DMZ was made to avoid conflict

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) – a UN treaty aimed at nuclear disarmament and controlling nuclear technology

General Overview

History

The first issue of the Korean Peninsula was it's original division. After the Soviet Union defeated the Japanese they took control of Japan and it's colonies. At the time Korea was a colony of Japan. Because the United States and the Soviet Union has decided earlier that the plan was to have a trusteeship plan in Korea the United States submitted the idea of dividing it two and each nation trusteeship each half. The United States and the Soviet Union at the time had very different political ideas. The United States was in favor of a democratic system while the Soviet Union favored its own system of communism. This proved a negative as the two neighbors began disagreeing on political idea.



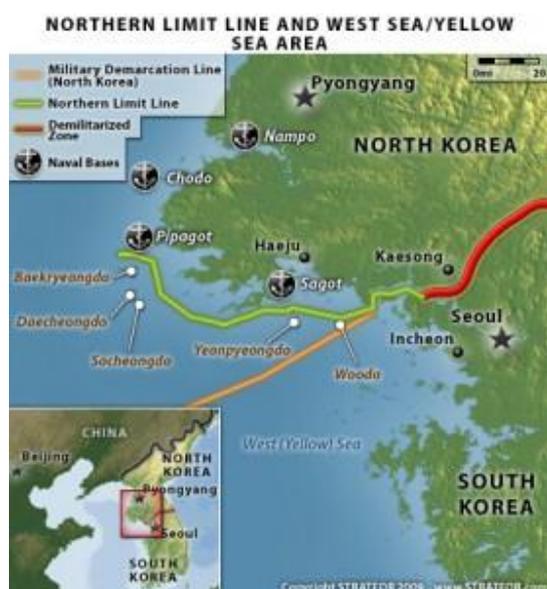
Korean War

The Soviet Union left North Korea with a very strong army and technology such as tanks and artillery. The United States left the South with a weak army presence and very little technology. This eventually led to the invasion of South Korea by the North Korean army, which started the Korean War. With its superior army North Korea was able to easily move through South Korea. Without the United States, UN, and United Kingdom's intervention it is easy to say that North Korea would have been able to take control of the entire peninsula. This intervention however, turned into assistance as the United States, UN, United Kingdom, and the South Korean army pushed the North Korean forces back and past their border. This was until the Chinese intervened to protect their fellow communist nation. This eventually became the Korean War. With the United States, UN, and the United Kingdom supporting the South Koreans against North Korea who has the assistance of the Soviet Union and China. The Korean War said to be where "The Cold War turned hot" (Michael Hickey) as it was the only fighting which occurred between the Soviet Union and the United States.

Modern Conflicts

The Korean War was followed with multiple assassination attempts on South Korean presidents. These were almost all attacks by North Korean Special Forces however the North Korean government is as usual not publicizing much about these occurrences. These attacks heightened tensions between the two nations, as they were seen as much as a direct assault on the nation as actual war. They also killed many political members and the President's wife. This was an attempt by the North Koreans to weaken the government of South Korea. These were very strong signs that the conflict between the two nations had not ended with the armistice of the 1953, which ended the Korean War. This theme of continuation and escalation of the conflict between the two carries on far into the 20th and 21st century.

As recently as 2010 there have been violent conflicts between the two nations. These are not similar to the attacks on the South Korean President, as these new attacks resemble war more than the former attacks. The main source of conflict has been along the naval borders. These have been argued for years between North and South Korea as to where the border lies in the sea. South Korea argue the border lies on Northern Limit Line (Green line in Figure below)



which was drawn by the American army general in charge of South Korea at the time. Since then North Korea has drawn its own line, known as the military demarcation line (Orange in the Figure below). The main argument of North Korea are former International Criminal Court rulings in the Black Sea and English Channel which state that small island should not be taken into account when drawing sea borders and instead be given a small area of sea around them.

These issues have just recently started occurring after a time of relative peace and therefore show that the situation may be worsening. However it has been known for a long time that the border as



well as the demilitarized zone surrounding it have not always been so peaceful and since the end of the Korean War have been places of extreme tension.

Major Parties Involved

North Korea – The nation established north of the 38th parallel, known by western culture as a communist one-man dictatorship lead by Kim Jung-II. The nation is shut off from global media for fear of westernized propaganda and is for a long time viewed as one of the nations with the strictest censorship of media.

South Korea – The nation established south of the 38th parallel, a democratic nation seen by many as the much more western of the two nations in the Korean Peninsula

United States of America – the original trustee of South Korea, the United States still has support for South Korea as it's main voice in the Security Council and the nation who has brought up the most cases against North Korea in Security Council

China and Russian Federation – As the supporters of North Korea in the Korean War, they too still have much support for North Korea. They rejected the cases made by the United States against North Korea in the Security Council

United Nations – as the creator and overseer of the Demilitarized Zone and the conflict as a whole since the Korean War, the UN actively seeks for a solution that would lead to no more conflict and less violence between the two nations

Timeline of Key Events

August 15 1945 – The Korean Peninsula is divided at the 38th parallel by the United States and Soviet Union after World War II when the Soviet Union defeated Japan.

December 7 1945 – a five-year trusteeship plan was written by the United States and Soviet Union during which the Korean government can prepare for independence

August 15th 1948 – the United States hands over governing power to the Republic of Korea

June 23rd 1950 – July 27th 1953 – Korean War, fighting between the North and south eventually turned into war with the North supported by the Soviet Union and China with the South being aided by United State, United Nations, and the United Kingdom. A armistice was signed in 1953 however many believe the war is still being fought today.

January 21st 1968 – North Korean special forces raid Seoul's presidential house in an attempt to assassinate President Park Chung-Hee

August 15th 1974 – North Korean agent fires shot at President Park Chung-Hee during one of his speeches. The President is not injured but his wife is killed



October 9th 1983 – North Korean agents attack a landmark in Burma/Myanmar before President Chun Hoo-Hwan arrives. Four cabinet members and 16 others are killed in the blast

November 29th 1987 – 115 people are killed when a bomb explodes on a South Korean airline jet planted by North Korean agents

September 1996 – A North Korean submarine land troops on the South Korean coast. All but one of the 24 troops are either captured or killed

June 15th 1999 – November 10th 2009 – Naval battles between the two nations occur along the Yellow Sea border. In total 33 North Koreans were killed

January 2003 – North Korea withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty increasing tension and the fear of North Korea possessing nuclear arms

May 20th 2010 – An explosion occurs on a South Korean war ship near the disputed border. 58 are saved but 46 die. Later, a multinational investigation team reported that a torpedo launched from a North Korean submarine sank the ship

May 24th 2010 – after news of the attack South Korea suspends trade with North Korea and bans North Korean ships from Seoul's harbor backed by the United States

October 29th 2010 – North and South Korean troops exchange fire across border before the G20 summit in Seoul

November 23rd, 2010 – North Korea fires artillery onto South Korean island along the disputed border, leads to fighting between North and South Korean troops. Results in casualties and property damage

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

There have been many attempts at solving the issue by the UN ever since the start of the Korean War. Since the end of the war the UN has created the Demilitarized Zone and overseen the progress of the passed solutions. They have however been quite unable to deal with the major issues in the past few years. The debate over the sea border is one which the UN has been unable to solve as resolutions and clauses submitted in the Security Council have had little to no progress because of the vetoes from the United States, Russian Federation and China. As the issue of sea borders is one which has cause the most clashes in the past few years the UN and the Security Council must find a way to solve the issue.

One way in which they have tried to solve the issue is the “Six Party Talks” which are talks between North Korea, South Korea, USA, Russia, China, and Japan. These are designed to deal with the issue in a less formal way than debate so as come up with plans that will solve the issue with which both sides agree.

Possible Solutions

The solution of this issue is about coming up with plans that both sides agree with. As there are so many small issues such as the multiple small clashes, it is important to focus on the roots of these clashes than the clashes themselves. This means focusing on the



disagreement of sea borders, fishing areas, international trade, and nuclear threats. The ICC could solve the issue of the sea borders as they have made rulings on sea borders in the past. However there would need to be some way to make sure that both sides agree to follow this ruling as the ultimate ruling. After the solution of that, it may be necessary to solve the issue of fishing areas and regulations. After these have been solved it may be in order to open the border between the nations to allow more trade. The most fragile topic however, is the issue of nuclear weapons. This is as much a issue in the Peninsula as it is to the rest of the world. However it is even more prominent in the Peninsula as South Korea stands one of the largest chances of attack as North Korea's closest and most deep-rooted enemy. However it is important to realize the importance of joint decisions as the resolution faces the problem of not being followed by a government as unpredictable as the North Korean government can be.



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