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## **Committee Scope**

Being one of the six main organs of the United Nations (UN), it is the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) primary duty to maintain international peace and security according to the article 24 of the United Nations Charter (which is the document that guides all operations of the UN). Second, the UNSC must always try to develop friendly relations between nations, work alongside with nations to cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights and finally, be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations, controlling nations wills and powers.

This reunion of the council will be composed by twenty five members of the of the United Nations, including the foundation members, The People's Republic of China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America as permanent members; and other twenty two years-rotation members elected by the General Assembly. Finally, each nation shall have two delegates representing themselves.

According to the Chapter V of the United Nations Charter, the UNSC must submit reports for the General Assembly, an annual report and specials reports when there is a need for it. Besides, all nations of the United Nation agree to accept the UNSC's decisions. The reffeed organ can establish subsidiaries organs for its assistance and has its own rules of procedure. All these rules are kept in the Provisional Rules of Procedure.

Therefore, it is expected for the UNSC to easier the dialogue and the diplomacy between parts in conflict, without prejudice to rights or claims of each part. It is a duty of this organ to seek for the maintenance of the international peace, even if the measures involve an armed force. These measures must be adequate and the UNSC may convoque all members of the United Nations to apply them. Thus, the UN and the UNSC intend to reach for dialogue in order to solve international problems and conflicts.



United Nations Charter. 2018. Available in:

<<http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-i/index.html>>.

## **THE IMPACT OF THE NORTH KOREAN NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.**

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### **Introduction: The Paranoid Peninsula.<sup>1</sup>**

PARANOID *adjective*. 1. Characterized by or resembling paranoia; a tendency on the part of an individual or group toward excessive or irrational suspiciousness and distrustfulness of others. 2. Characterized by suspiciousness, persecutory trends, or megalomania.<sup>2</sup>

The Korean Peninsula or, as president Bill Clinton of the United States of America (USA) would say 'the Cold War last divide', is probably one of the most unstable territories around the world due to its past history and the two nations that resides inside the region. The southern Republic of Korea, or just South Korea, and the northern Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), also known as North Korea. In the same length of 1,100 kilometers, a great ally of the USA shares the same space with the only unreformed Stalinist-style command government/economy that still exists.

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In light of the facts aforementioned, the definition given to the countries by Paul French, the author of *North Korea, State of Paranoia*, of paranoid state and even a paranoid peninsula is completely understandable. Considering the incredibly tense region created between the two countries relations and all the prejudgement made by the occidental nations against any country that do not follow their own steps. Which starts to convert the whole occidental world paranoid about North Korea and its surroundings.

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<sup>1</sup> FRENCH, Paul. **North Korea, State of Paranoia**. London. Zed Books Ltd, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> FRENCH, Op. Cit.

<sup>3</sup> FRENCH, Op. Cit.



It is also important to emphasize that the DPRK is a country with an enormous role in the current debates of international relations and also past debates, recognizing that the Korean Peninsula played a famous role in the World War II (WWII) and the Cold War. Not only historical, the recent North Korean manifestations are widely known to cause fear and despair throughout the globe; such as the title mentioned Kim Jong Un's New Year's message or even breaking news alerting the recent acquisition of intercontinental ballistic missiles<sup>4</sup> that can, depending on the lens used to see it, be a problem of same or even major importance than the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

Said so, with such actions that supposedly threatens the international security, other members from the international community started to take action towards those movements, positioning themselves according to what they think of and how they relate to North Korea, creating different blocks of countries by the same time it stresses the bad behavior with different nations.

Without further ado, it is necessary to understand the past to be able to analyse the present with utmost certainty, which makes not talking about the history of the two countries in vogue, the USA and the DPRK almost unavoidable.

### **A briefing to the North Korean - American history.**

Before the closure of WWII, the Korean Peninsula was under control of the Japanese government, who ended up losing the war against the allies and used the Korean territory as a method of payment for the war expenses. By the same time, an internal leader of guerilla from the north of the peninsula that was inspired by eastern personalities such as Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong (these of which would further completely influence his government, since its creation, development, politics, economic style etc); started taking action against those Japanese troops; his name was Kim Il-sung.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> McCURRY, Justin & BORGHER, Julian. North Korea missile launch: regime says new rocket can hit anywhere in US. **The Guardian**. Available in: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/28/north-korea-has-fired-ballistic-missile-say-reports-in-south-korea>> Access on: 02/10/2018.

<sup>5</sup> FRENCH, Paul. Op. Cit.



As a part of the expenses payment was given in land and the Cold War was almost an immediate result of the WWII, the Korean territory was divided into two pieces along the 38th Parallel; one to the north, influenced by the Soviet Union and its ally, the People's Republic of China, with whom Kim Il-sung would find empowerment for his guerilla.

And in the other hand, the south was influenced by the other side of the globe, confirming the presence of the United States in the conflict.<sup>6</sup> With each division handling enough power to combat each other, the south was the first to proclaim its independence followed by the north, both openly stating that they did not accept each other legitimacy. By this way, in spite of the common sense which states that the Cold War was absent of physical conflict, the Korean War take-off was confirmed in 25th June 1950, filled with tension between capitalist against communist forces.<sup>7</sup>

American relations with the DPRK have been largely conducted in a cold war atmosphere. The US and the USSR fought one of their many ideological battles on the Korean peninsula, while Japan and China looked after their own security interests. The American and Soviet Roles in the Korean War have been well documented and need no further detail here.<sup>8</sup>

The conflict was established, South Koreans fighting the North Koreans, the Soviet Union and China. In the first official armed conflict, North Korea completely devastated its opponent with a huge war power guaranteed by the Soviet Union and hereafter, the Chinese army. President Truman of the U.S. saw all the devastation that South Korea was suffering and felt concerned about Stalin being an ally of another socialist country. Said so, trying to stop Stalin's will of power, the United States joined the war alongside the southern part of the peninsula, giving an end to the streak of attacks made by the northern part. Although not enough relevance is given to this war according to its majority, it left the whole peninsula devastated after the end of the war.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> STACK, Liam. Korean War, a 'Forgotten' Conflict That Shaped the Modern World. **The New York Times**. Available in: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/01/world/asia/korean-war-history.html> >. Access on: 15/02/2018

<sup>7</sup> STACK, Liam. Op. Cit.

<sup>8</sup> FRENCH, Paul. Op. Cit.

<sup>9</sup> MILLET, Allan R. . **The Korean War: The Essential**. Dulles. Potomac Books Inc, 2007.



Confirming the theory of a paranoid peninsula, the Korean War never had an official end; after a streak of failed armistice attempts, South Korea and North Korea could not reach their goals: destroying the opposite regime and reunite the peninsula, affirming the never ending tension in the territory.<sup>10</sup>

After the end of aggressions in 1953, both countries followed their own path. Sticking to the northern side, the recent elected Commander of the DPRK Kim Il-sung quickly showed a firm grip in his government, inherited from the personality cults<sup>11</sup> of his eastern heroes. Twelve men accused of planning to replace Il-sung with the leader of the communist party from the south, Pak Ho-yong, were found guilty and executed. Kim used trials as a manner to establish and confirm his power in North Korea, and this continued until 1977, when he effectively gained total control over the Korean Workers Party (KWP).

Il-sung used of almost every form to ensure his power and demonstrate to North Koreans that those who were in the 88th brigade from the WWII and fought alongside with him, the Supreme Leader, in his past guerilla were the true owners of power in the region. By this time, he started to model the history in his favor, emphasizing the guerilla tradition as “the true and only history of the Korean revolutionary movement”<sup>12</sup> for example, in Paul’s French words. He started as well to stimulate the normality of nation being nonaligned and independent to the rest of the globe, trying to contour the Sino-Soviet dispute and make new allies in the third world (which was pretty successful).<sup>13</sup>

Furthermore, Juche<sup>14</sup> (or *self-reliance*) is the name of the main philosophy/political theory used by Kim Il-sung to guide his population, also considered as his “original, brilliant and revolutionary contribution to national and international thought”<sup>15</sup>. It is necessary to understand Juche and its theories to be able to understand the today’s DPRK; seen as a progression of Marxism, juche is a way of life, the “ruling

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<sup>10</sup> STACK, Liam. Op. Cit.

<sup>11</sup> FRENCH, Paul. Op. Cit.

<sup>12</sup> FRENCH, Paul. Op. Cit., Pg. 53.

<sup>13</sup> FRENCH, Paul. Op. Cit.

<sup>14</sup> ARMSTRONG, Charles. **Juche and North Korea's Global Aspirations**. Available in: <[https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/NKIDP\\_Working\\_Paper\\_1\\_Juche\\_and\\_North\\_Koreas\\_Global\\_Aspirations\\_web.pdf](https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/NKIDP_Working_Paper_1_Juche_and_North_Koreas_Global_Aspirations_web.pdf)> Access on: 02/10/2018

<sup>15</sup> FRENCH, Paul. Op. Cit., Pg. 36.



creed of the country”<sup>16</sup>, that focuses all of its ideological efforts in promoting itself. It is Juche what makes the images Kim Il-sung, Kim Jong-il and Kim Jong-un as high as it is within the whole North Korean society.<sup>17</sup>

### **A briefing to the DPRK’s - USA diplomatic relation.**

The year 2002 proved a challenge to those committed to understanding Kim Jong-il. Following the admission that the DPRK had been kidnapping Japanese citizens and resultant diplomatic flurry in Pyongyang, and then the announcement of economic reforms, including the largely unexpected plans for Sinuiju, the statement on 17 October 2002 that North Korea had continued its nuclear weapons programme despite repeated claims to the contrary caused many jaws to drop. To understand the American reaction to the announcement from Pyongyang it is necessary to look at the history of US-DPRK relations.

Understanding the history and the conflicts that happened between countries is important to interpret the diplomatic relations that occur within the international international system. The diplomatic relations between USA and the DPRK are marked by the leaders that led each country during periods of diplomacy or threat. Therefore, we shall explain briefly important relations between the three leaders of North Korea and five presidents of the United States of America.

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea was created in 1948 and since its foundation is ruled by members of the Kim’s family. Kim Il-sung ruled the DPRK from its creation (1948) until 1994. His son, Kim Jong-il, commanded from 1994 until 2011 and was followed by Kim Jong-un, that rules the regime from 2011 until today.<sup>18</sup>

We shall start the explanation of the United States’ presidents from Ronald Reagan until Obama, in order to understand more the recent relation between the two nations. However, it does not mean that there were no relation between the two countries before.

Thus, the presidents’ terms can be shown in the following order: Ronald Reagan (1981-1989), George H W Bush (1989-1993), Bill Clinton (1993-2001),

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<sup>16</sup> FRENCH, Paul. Op. Cit., Pg. 36.

<sup>17</sup> ARMSTRONG, Charles. Op. Cit.

<sup>18</sup> ISOZAKI, Atsuhito. Understanding the North Korea Regime. **Wilson Center**, Washington, p. 1, April 2017.



George W Bush (2001-2009), and, finally, Barack Obama (2009-2017). US president Donald Trump started his term in 2017, but an explanation about his government will be given in another separated section.

Regarding diplomacy, the focus will be on the nuclear issue. That said, North Korea's first reactor was constructed by the Soviets in 1967. In the 60s and 70s North Korean scientists were trained by the Soviets, but later they started training their own analysts in universities. In 1986, under Kim Il-sung regime, they started a clandestine plutonium-producing reactor. The government of the US knew about these facilities from satellites images. Even though Ronald Reagan's first focus was on the relation with Soviet Union, he started the negotiations with North Korea, during a period when Kim Il-sung was ruling DPRK.<sup>19</sup>

This initial focus on the Soviet Union can be explained by the fact that Reagan started and ended his term (1981-1989) during the Cold War (1947-1991). According to the White House web site<sup>20</sup>, nominated by the Republican Party, Reagan expanded the security expenses in 35 percent. It is also said that he worked in order to negotiate with the Soviet Union.

In 1989, George H W Bush became the 41<sup>o</sup> president of the United States after Reagan. Under his term, the Soviet Union collapsed (1991). This fact changed dramatically the survivor of DPRK, that was still being lead by Kim Il-sung. The former Soviet Bloc was DPRK's primary source of assistance and help, so when they collapsed, North Korea lost an important ally and provider.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, Kim Il-sung tried a diplomatic approach with its neighbour, South Korea, when George H W Bush decided to remove the nuclear weapons of the US from South Korea. As a result, in 1992 they signed the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. In this same year, Under Secretary Arnold Kanter, from the United States, and the Secretary Kim Yong-sun had a meeting in New York after satellites images were leaked to the media.<sup>22</sup> It seemed that Kim Il-sung was

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<sup>19</sup> HECKER, Siegfried. Three Kims and six US presidents later, diplomacy can still solve the North Korea Crisis. *New Perspectives Quarterly*, p.2, Fall 2017.

<sup>20</sup> WHITE HOUSE. Ronald Reagan. Available in: <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/ronald-reagan/>>. Access on: 03/10/2018

<sup>21</sup> HECKER, Siegfried. Op cit, p.18.

<sup>22</sup> HECKER, Siegfried. Op cit, p.18.



starting to cooperate with the US, but this scenario changed dramatically when George H W Bush left office.

In 1993 Bill Clinton started his term. The situation between the two countries got exceptionally tense when North Korea announced that it would not follow the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), signed previously by the DPRK. In 1993, Pyongyang launched a missile.<sup>23</sup> The situation did not get any worse because former President Jim Carter intervened and negotiated with Kim Il-sung in exchange of aid and supply. However, both countries became suspicious about each one's activities after that.

From the years 1992 to 1994, North Korea went through great difficulties. Regarding that it can be highlighted that in 1994 Kim il-sung died, being replaced by his son, Kim Jong-il. Moreover, DPRK's relationship with the US was still tense and between 1995 and 1996 a flood happened, which led to a huge famine.<sup>24</sup>

Within this context of increasingly tense relation, now lead by Kim Jong-il, in 1998 the North Korea launched another missile, which overflowed Japan. As a response, Former Secretary of Defense William J. Perry was asked to solve the crises using a more diplomatic approach, but Clinton's term came to an end<sup>25</sup> when Bill Clinton was impeached by the House of Representatives.<sup>26</sup>

After the impeachment, in 2001, 43<sup>o</sup> US President George W Bush started his term and took a different direction towards the relation between Washington and Pyongyang. Using a less diplomatic approach, he decided to punish North Korea with sanctions for violating the Agreement Framework. Kim Jong-il responded by threatening to withdraw the agreement and by stating that he had nuclear weapons.<sup>27</sup>

The situation came out of control when, in 2006, DPRK made its first nuclear test. The Bush's government tried to use diplomatic resources, but it was too

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<sup>23</sup> GOLDMAN, Russell. How Trump's predecessor dealt with the North Korean threat, **The New York Times**, 2017. Available in: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/17/world/asia/trump-north-korea-threat.html>> Access on: 02/20/2018

<sup>24</sup> HAGGARD, Stephan; NOLAND, Marcus. Hunger and Human Rights: the politics of famine in North Korea. **US Committee for Human Rights in North Korea**, Washington, p. 13-14, 2005.

<sup>25</sup> HECKER, Siegfried. Op cit, p.19.

<sup>26</sup> WHITE HOUSE, William J Clinton. Available at: <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/william-j-clinton/>> Access on: 03/10/2018

<sup>27</sup> GOLDMAN, Russel. Op cit.

late. When Bush ended his term DPRK had about six primitive nuclear bombs and willingness to increase its nuclear program.<sup>28</sup>

Within this context, Barack Obama became the 44<sup>o</sup> US President in 2009. Months after he started his term, North Korea tested a missile and detonated bombs, putting the president in a difficult situation to solve. Rather than using dialogue and diplomacy, Obama decided to act by spying and sanctioning, hoping that it would affect North Korea and solve the problem in a more “patient way”.<sup>29</sup>

The United Nation Security Council sanctioned Pyongyang as well, and the DPRK responded by ending diplomacy and expelling inspectors that were investigating the nuclear facilities. Even though the nuclear program of North Korea was increasing significantly, Obama decided not to negotiate directly with Kim Jong-il and continued the sanctions against the country. While all this was happening, North Korea's nuclear arsenal increased more and more.<sup>30</sup>

In 2011, during Obama’s government, Kim Jong-il died and Kim Jong-un became the leader of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. He went beyond his father and his grand-father and decided to create a missile that can reach another continent. In 2016 he tested a nuclear warhead.<sup>31</sup> It is important to stress all those facts in order to see that Kim Jong-un started to rule North Korea already in a context of tense relations and threats between Pyongyang and the United Nations and shows that he is really willing to initiate a war. Besides that, it is also in this context of uncertainty and threat that in January first 2017 Donald Trump starts his term as the 45<sup>o</sup> United States’ president, which can help the understanding of the contemporary relations between the two countries.

### **Is diplomacy dead between the US and the DPRK?**

The question that opens this section is of utmost intrigue, is there any hope left between this two nations? In light of these facts, it is settled the need to comprehend where the future of their exquisite bond is heading towards to. Said so, the

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<sup>28</sup> HECKER, Siegfried. Op cit, p.20-21.

<sup>29</sup> Goldman, Russel. Op cit.

<sup>30</sup> HECKER, Siegfried. Op cit, p.21-22.

<sup>31</sup> Goldman, Russel. Op cit.



recent New Year's pronouncement by the North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un will be used as the main study of this article, aiming to answer the following question: the New Year's pronouncement indicates a possible reopening from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to diplomacy with the United States of America?

Following that path, the event aforementioned will be analyzed in a study guided by one of the main strands of the International Relations: realism, with focus on the neorealism of Kenneth Waltz. Also, other events shall be analyzed to give more content to the study.

### **Analyzing the New Year's pronouncement.**

In this section we shall analyze Kim Jong-un's New Year pronouncement, using some important extracts from the speech, in order to answer the following question: the New Year's pronouncement indicates a possible reopening from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to diplomacy with the United States of America? This analyse will be made taking into consideration the neorealist author of International Relations Kenneth Waltz, specifically his book entitled *Theory of International Politics*.

#### **1. Previous context**

That said, we shall contextualize. In 2017, Kim Jong-un gave a New Year's message saying that he would develop an intercontinental ballistic missile, demonstrating his power to the world. Donald Trump, however, responded to it by using the social media Twitter, with the response "It won't happen!"<sup>32</sup> The response given by US President Donald Trump was a clear sign that he would not invest in diplomatic resolutions or talks with the government of North Korea. Though it seemed so, Trump indicated that he would may meet Kim Jong-un.<sup>33</sup>

It is important to see how significant a willingness to talk, even though small, is influential. This can be said because Trump has a remarkably important

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<sup>32</sup> SANG-HUN, Choe. Kim Jong-un Offers North Korea's Hand to South, While Chiding U.S. The New York Times, 2017. Available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/31/world/asia/north-korea-kim-jong-un-olympics.html>> Access on: 02/20/2018

<sup>33</sup> HECKER, Siegfried. Op cit, p.22.



role for preventing war between Pyongyang and Washington. If a war happens, it will probably lead to deaths on both sides. As Hecker concludes:<sup>34</sup>

It is not that diplomacy with Pyongyang failed over the past 30 years but rather that Washington has not carried out diplomacy effectively. It has vacillated between negotiations and threats. A close look at the record shows that although Pyongyang has never given up its drive for a nuclear deterrent, nuclear progress slowed significantly during times of diplomacy and accelerated during times of isolation, sanctions and threats. Ironically, Washington has failed to deal effectively with Pyongyang's transgressions when it violated accords and when it egregiously exported nuclear technologies in the past.

This quote shows how important it is for the United States to maintain an open dialogue and negotiations with North Korea in order to avoid great damages. The year of 2017 was full of threats and uncertainties, but scarce of negotiations and talks. In 2018, however, the tense environment seemed to change when Kim Jong-un gave a New Year's speech that appears to be a first step for diplomacy with DPRK's neighbor, South Korea. But can it mean a more open dialogue with the United States of America as well?

Kim Jong-un said in his speech a significant phrase, which seems to have as a receptor the United States of America. Kim Jong-un stated that he has a "red button" on his table that can be activated at any time, a button capable of launching nuclear bombs. He said the following phrase: "It's not a mere threat but a reality that I have a nuclear button on the desk in my office".<sup>35</sup>

## 2. "It's not a mere threat but a reality"<sup>36</sup>

It is with this important phase that we shall start the analysis of the speech using the thought of Kenneth Waltz. First, it can be explained by taking into consideration the anarchical order of this neorealist author, a very important concept for the study of International Relations in his point of view.

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<sup>34</sup> HECKER, Siegfried. Op cit, p.22.

<sup>35</sup> SANG-HUN, Choe. Kim Jong-un Offers North Korea's Hand to South, While Chiding U.S. The New York Times, 2017. Available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/31/world/asia/north-korea-kim-jong-un-olympics.html>> Access on: 02/20/2018

<sup>36</sup> SANG-HUN, Op cit.



He says that the relations between countries and nations is characterized by anarchy. This means that there is no superior power between nations. In face of a conflict, there is not a “world government” to solve the issue. To him, the international system is composed of a structure with units that interact between themselves. All these unities have its own sovereignty and power to decide whether to cooperate or not. Therefore, each nation must survive in this anarchical system and provide its own protection.<sup>37</sup>

Regarding the nuclear issue in North Korea and using the systemic analysis of Kenneth Waltz, one can say that the possession of nuclear bombs by the referred country is an important factor so that the DPRK maintains its legitimacy and safety in this anarchical system. Besides, the possession of nuclear bombs can also lead to a more stable system, according to the analysis of Kenneth Waltz.

This happens because once there is no power, government or any type of superior power to protect North Korea in the anarchical system, North Korea has to protect itself from threats of other countries and keep its national security and legitimacy. Once they possess nuclear weapons, they can protect themselves better in order not to litter the world order, but to keep their relative position in the system.

Therefore, saying that “It’s not a mere threat but a reality that I have a nuclear button on the desk in my office”<sup>38</sup> can be interpreted as follows: if one says that one has a button that can be activated at any time, it may initially be seen as a serious threat. However, Kim Jong-un says that he is not threatening, and that it is just the reality. It may sound confusing, but using Kenneth Waltz thought it can be explained as a way of showing North Korea’s power and strength, as an attempt of keeping its power and sovereignty from the danger and interference of the United States and other countries of the system.

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<sup>37</sup> WALTZ, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics*. Random House, New York, 1979.

<sup>38</sup> SANG-HUN, Choe. Kim Jong-un Offers North Korea’s Hand to South, While Chiding U.S. *The New York Times*, 2017. Available at: <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/31/world/asia/north-korea-kim-jong-un-olympics.html>> Access on: 02/20/2018

### 3. “[...] North and South can urgently meet to discuss the matter”<sup>39</sup>

Regarding South Korea, however, he is direct when he says that he is open for dialogue. He says: “I am willing to send a delegation and take necessary measures, and I believe that the authorities of the North and South can urgently meet to discuss the matter”.<sup>40</sup> Besides that, he shows a willing to leave aside the military tensions between North Korea and South Korea when he says: “Above all, we must ease the acute military tensions between the North and the South”.<sup>41</sup>

Therefore, it is clear that Kim Jong-un is ready for negotiations. That is even clearer when he affirms that the Olympic delegation of North Korea will be attending the Winter Olympic Game, in South Korea. An interesting fact is that after the pronouncement it was said that the General Kim Yong-chol, from the DPRK, would attend the closing ceremony of the Winter Olympics. This General is known as the one responsible for planning some of the attacks that North Korea did against South Korea.<sup>42</sup> Having this person in South Korea can be interpreted as a huge step towards more negotiations.

When the Winter Olympic Game took place, Kim Jong-un’s sister, Kim Yo-jong, was seen at the opening ceremony. During the event, she invited the South Korea’s president, Moon Jae-in, for a meeting with her brother. It was said that Ivanka Trump, daughter of the president Donald Trump, will be present in the closing ceremony as well as a representative of the American delegation. However, officials said that the president of the United States will not be attending any meeting with representatives of the DPRK.<sup>43</sup>

Now that the Winter Games are over, it is known that President Donald Trump decided to meet Kim Jong-un. In a very short period of time a lot of

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<sup>39</sup> SANG-HUN, Op cit.

<sup>40</sup> SANG-HUN, Op cit.

<sup>41</sup> SANG-HUN, Op cit.

<sup>42</sup> SANG-HUN, Former Spymaster to Lead North Korea’s Olympic Ceremony Delegation, The New York Times, 2018. Available in: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/22/world/asia/north-korea-south-olympics.html> Access on: 02/20/2018

<sup>43</sup> SANG-HUN, Op cit.



things changed and happened within the relation between the two countries, and that will be discussed in the next section.

### **Facts and actions that took important roles.**

It is important to understand what happened a little bit before and after the New Year's message and how the bonds and relations made with the DPRK are succeeding, thus it is not possible to analyze what will happen after this paper is written. Then, we shall start looking over some recent facts and actions that have the potential to change the image already constructed of North Korea.

#### **1. North Korea's latest missile launch.**

Since November 29th, it is officially recognized that the DPRK declares itself as a "complete" nuclear state and has acquired a new type of intercontinental ballistic missile that is technological enough to cross almost the whole globe and hit anywhere in the United States of America. In McCurry and Borger's words:

The regime's claims have not been independently verified, but experts had been expecting North Korea to demonstrate that it now has all of the US in range – a development that significantly strengthens its position in any negotiations with Washington over its nuclear weapons programme.<sup>44</sup>

Although this notice seems alarming to any other country, president Donald Trump of the U.S. does not seem frightened at all, when he says " We will take care of it ... it is a situation that we will handle."<sup>45</sup>, which while being analyzed by a neorealist optic can be seen as a dispute of power, confirming that both countries must not show any kind of weakness, so the balance of power is maintained.

#### **2. The Winter Olympics of Pyeongchang.**

The New Year's message had a good effect on South Korea, leading to the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics starts. When the time comes for the

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<sup>44</sup> McCURRY, Justin & BORGER, Julian. Op.Cit.

<sup>45</sup> McCURRY, Justin & BORGER, Julian. Op.Cit.



korean delegation to enter, the North Korean delegation and the South Korean delegation walk through the opening ceremony with the same uniforms and marching with an unified Korea flag. In theory, both countries are still in war, once a peace treaty has not been signed yet. However, during the parade Moon Jae-in, president of South Korea, was shaking hand with Kim Jong-un's sister, Kim Yo-jong. Another important fact seen during the Winter Olympic Games the women's hockey team was composed of athletes of North Korea as well as athletes of South Korea.<sup>46</sup>

This can be seen as an approach for an open dialogue and negotiation between both countries. In a very symbolic way, specially regarding the march with the unified Korean flag, North Korea shows an open channel for a more peaceful resolution of this tense relationship between the two countries.

### **3. North Korea is willing to give up on nuclear weapons?**

After almost 3 months of attempts of reconciliation between the Koreas, representatives of Seoul returned from meetings with the DPRK's Supreme Leader in Pyongyang with a smile on the face. South Korea affirms that North Korea is willing to have a "in an open-ended dialogue to discuss the issue of denuclearization and to normalize relations with North Korea."<sup>47</sup> In light of these facts, Seoul believes that Kim is telling the truth, but the U.S. will only accept any kind of talk after there is some "credible moves" towards denuclearization.

While the strings keep stretched between USA-DPRK, it is necessary to recognize the advance made by North Korea towards South Korea in a much more diplomatic way, giving the possibility to Moon Jae-In (South Korea's president) send four people of his trust to meet Kim Jong-un himself. It is not everything they wanted, but it is "something to work with".<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> DAVIS, Scott. The South and North Korean Olympic delegations marched at the opening ceremony under a unified Korea flag. Available in: <<http://www.businessinsider.com/south-korea-north-korea-olympics-together-opening-ceremony-2018-2>> Access on 02/20/2018

<sup>47</sup> BERLINGER, Joshua & JUNGEUN, Kim. North Korea willing to talk to US about giving up nuclear weapons, Seoul says. CNN. Available in: <<https://edition.cnn.com/2018/03/06/asia/north-korea-summit-intl/index.html>> Access on: 08/03/18

<sup>48</sup> BERLINGER, Joshua & JUNGEUN, Kim. Op. Cit.



#### **4. Trump meeting Kim, will it happen again?**

Yes, Donald Trump accepted to talk with the North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un, but the U.S. still trying to maintain its position about the denuclearization although it is a bit confused, affirms Jim Michaels, from USA Today.<sup>49</sup>

Also, Moon will soon meet with Kim as well, which may dictates how the meeting with Trump will be, acknowledging that the South Korean president has made more progress with reconnecting with the DPRK than anyone else.

#### **Impacts in Human Rights.**

Even though everything that was related previously was focused on diplomacy and the relation between the countries in a more macro level, it is important to address the problem regarding Human Rights. It is widely known that North Korea disrespect several Human Rights on its citizens and prisoners, but it is also important to understand the role of the United States of America and even the United Nations on the violation of Human Rights.

When trying to find a solution for the problem, if on choose either war or diplomacy, people are involved. That said, what will happen between the United States and North Korea must be analyzed also regarding Human Rights. Any measure taken must take into consideration the human lives and the human rights.

An example of this impact on Human Rights are the sanctions imposed on the country. A economic sanction, for instance, is extremely felt on the people and specially the poorest ones. Therefore, although it is important to keep paying attention to both governments and their brawls, the need to open eyes widely enough to see through those barriers and actually understand how populations lives matters almost the same as governmental actions is something that should be put into consideration.

A war, conflict or sanction does not involve only the economy or the politics of a nation, but it also affects directly its people. In 2017, for example, the

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<sup>49</sup> MICHAELS, Jim. Trump-Kim summit: Will it happen and other key questions. **USA Today**. Available in: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/03/11/trump-kim-summit-happen-and-other-key-questions/414711002/> Access on: 03/11/18.



UNSC decided to sanction North Korea regarding Human Rights. U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said that those sanctions are important because the violation of Human Right in the country causes suffer and is a way to keep the Kim's family in power. Japan's U.N. Ambassador Koro Bessho told that the Human Rights situation in North Korea is terrible and the sanctions are because of the authorities.<sup>50</sup>

The UN rights chief Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein, however, stated that the sanctions imposed on North Korea were a huge obstacle toward humanitarian aid for the population. He also asked the United Nations Security Council for an assessment regarding the impact that the sanctions are having in North Korea<sup>51</sup>. Therefore, all actions and decisions have consequences in Human Rights.

## **Conclusion.**

Thus, it is been noticed that the DPRK seems a lot more open to dialog than before, recognizing its efforts towards rapprochement with the Republic of Korea, also, demonstrating its willingness to dialogue with the USA although it still shows its capacity of threat.

Yes, diplomacy is still an option to the US-DPRK relation, but it is difficult to predict the two nations movements because of their unstableness. Turning to

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<sup>50</sup> NICHOLS, Michelle. Top UN officials warn that North Korea sanctions harming aid delivery. Reuters. Available at: <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-rights-un/top-u-n-officials-warn-that-north-korea-sanctions-harming-aid-delivery-idUSKBN1E51WX>> Access on: 03/11/2018

<sup>51</sup> THE GUARDIAN, UN warns tough North Korea sanctions risk hurting millions in need of aid. Available at: <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/11/north-korea-sanctions-human-rights-toll-united-nations>> Access on: 03/11/2018



the DPRK's side, in times of Cold War, Kim Jong-il did deviate its participation in subjects of big importance in a attempt to empower its relations with other nations, so, it is possible that the same plan is being used again, as North Korea seems completely open to the South of its own peninsula, but still skeptical about US's actions.

This can either mean a change in the world history or an attempt of the North Korea to gain benefits from the negotiations without really changing anything in the regime or in its way to deal with the international community. However, the uncertainty that surrounds this topic challenges a greater conclusion, once we cannot be sure about what could happen tomorrow.

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## **Block Position**

### **1. Africa (Benin, Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar.)**

The relation of North Korea with some African countries has become tighter since the Cold War. As a way to look for allies, North Korea searched for socialists or newly liberated countries in the continent. A report of the United Nations stated that North Korea avoided sanctions in order to supply Benin and the Democratic Republic of Congo, among other countries, in 2017<sup>52</sup>. North Korea has even constructed the Iavoloha Palace in Madagascar, the official residence of the president of Madagascar<sup>53</sup>. So, these african countries tends to ally themselves with the DPRK.

### **2. Pro-North Korea (China, North Korea, Russia.)**

This group is characterized by a support for the government of North Korea. That said, North Korea itself is present within this group. The relation of North Korea and China is dated back to the 60s, when the two countries signed a treaty of friendship. China is the most important negotiator with North Korea, representing more than 90% of North Korea trade. However, their relation is not really friendly regarding North Korea's nuclear program. Regarding their relation with Russia, it is important to emphasize the in 2015 they declared a year of friendship. Russia has even condemned the sanctions imposed on North Korea as counter-productive, but also condemns North Korea's nuclear program<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> MTSHALI, Khanya. Eleven African countries will be probed by the UN over their military ties with North Korea. Quartz Africa, 2017. Available at: <<https://qz.com/1076850/north-koreas-military-ties-to-11-african-countries-are-being-probed-by-the-un/>> Access on: 19/03/2018

<sup>53</sup> GOFF, Samuel. North Korea's strange and surprisingly effective charm offensive in Africa. The Calvert Journal. Available at: <<https://www.calvertjournal.com/features/show/5336/red-africa-che-onejoon-north-korea-statues-africa>>. Access on: 19/03/2018.

<sup>54</sup> BATSAKIS, Anthea. North Korea allies: Who has Kim Jong-un's back? Herald Sun, 2017. Available at: <<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/business/work/north-korea-allies-who-has-kim-jonguns-back/new-s-story/4b0591dc07a5dcc2038d1ef2fb00f69f>> Access on: 18/03/2018



### **3. Neutrals (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Venezuela.)**

South Africa and India have North Korea's embassy in their countries and tend to have friendly relations with the country. Australia and New Zealand do not have embassies in North Korea, but they maintain diplomatic relations. Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia do not have embassies in North Korea as well. The case of South Korea is changing, once the country is showing a more open diplomatic relation with North Korea. It is important to highlight that being in the Neutral Block does not mean a lack of positioning, but a more open to dialogue and a willing for diplomacy.

### **4. Europe (Bulgaria, France, United Kingdom, Germany, Turkey.)**

The European Union (EU) has a policy of critical engagement towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). Its goals are to support a lasting diminution of tensions on the Korean peninsula and in the region, to uphold the international non-proliferation regime and to improve the situation of human rights in the DPRK.

Although most EU countries maintains diplomatic relations with North Korea, EU "supports international efforts to promote peace and stability" in the Korean Peninsula by trying to effective depromote denuclearisation and improve in the human rights situation in the DPRK, which is considered dire.

### **5. Pro-United States of America (Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Japan, United States of America.)**

This group, considered as the opposite of the group number 2, is characterized by the other empowered nation in the current topic, the U.S. . Being put together by their extreme affinity in the international area, these nations are completely against the DPRK's nuclear programme and see them as "a threat to the international security itself". Although some countries here present maintains stable relations with North Korea, their biggest ally is the U.S., which means they should side with it. Said so,



being extremely counter the DPRK's, attempts to start denuclearization and destabilize North Korea is expected as it was in the past few years.