Chronology of U.S.-North Korean Nuclear and Missile Diplomacy

For years, the United States and the international community have tried to negotiate an end to North Korea’s nuclear and missile development and its export of ballistic missile technology. Those efforts have been replete with periods of crisis, stalemate, and tentative progress towards denuclearization, and North Korea has long been a key challenge for the global nuclear nonproliferation regime.

In 1994, faced with North Korea’s announced intent to withdraw from the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), which requires non-nuclear weapon states to forswear the development and acquisition of nuclear weapons, the United States and North Korea signed the Agreed Framework. Under this agreement, Pyongyang committed to freezing its illicit plutonium weapons program in exchange for aid.

Following the collapse of this agreement in 2002, North Korea claimed that it had withdrawn from the NPT in January 2003 and once again began operating its nuclear facilities.

The second major diplomatic effort were the Six-Party Talks initiated in August of 2003 which involved China, Japan, North Korea, Russia, South Korea, and the United States. In between periods of stalemate and crisis, those talks arrived at critical breakthroughs in 2005, when North Korea pledged to abandon “all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs” and return to the NPT, and in 2007, when the parties agreed on a series of steps to implement that 2005 agreement.

Those talks, however, broke down in 2009 following disagreements over verification and an internationally condemned North Korea rocket launch. Pyongyang has since stated that it would never return to the talks and is no longer bound by their agreements. The other five parties state that they remain committed to the talks, and have called for Pyongyang to recommit to its 2005 denuclearization pledge.

In January 2018, another diplomatic effort began when North Korean leader Kim Jong Un declared the country's nuclear arsenal "complete" and offered to discuss with Seoul North Korea’s participation in the South Korean Olympics. North Korea's delegation to the Olympics included Kim Jong Un's sister, who met with South Korean President Moon Jae-in. That meeting led to a sustained inter-Korean dialouge, including a meeting between Kim Jong Un and Moon Jae-in April 27 that produced a declaration referencing the shared goal of denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

During a high-level meeting with South Korean officials in Pyongyang in March, Kim Jong Un conveyed his interest in meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump. Trump accepted the offer and the two leaders will meet June 12 in Singapore.

The following chronology summarizes in greater detail developments in North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs, and the efforts to end them, since 1985.

**1985**

**December 12, 1985:** North Korea accedes to the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) but does not complete a safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Under Article III of the NPT, North Korea has 18 months to conclude such an arrangement. In coming years, North Korea links adherence to this provision of the treaty to the withdrawal of U.S. nuclear weapons from South Korea.

**1991**

**September 27, 1991:** President George Bush announces the unilateral withdrawal of all naval and land-based tactical nuclear weapons deployed abroad. Approximately 100 U.S. nuclear weapons had been based in South Korea. Eight days later, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev reciprocates.

**November 8, 1991:** In response to President Bush’s unilateral move, President Roh Tae Woo of South Korea announces the Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, under which South Korea promises not to produce, possess, store, deploy, or use nuclear weapons. In addition, the declaration unilaterally prohibits South Korea from possessing nuclear reprocessing or uranium enrichment facilities. These promises, if enacted, would satisfy all of North Korea’s conditions for allowing IAEA inspections of its nuclear facilities.

**1992**

**January 20, 1992:** The two Koreas sign the *South-North Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula*. Under the declaration, both countries agree not to “test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy or use nuclear weapons” or to “possess nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities.” They also agree to mutual inspections for verification.

**January 30, 1992:** More than six years after signing the NPT, North Korea concludes a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

**March 6, 1992:** The United States imposes sanctions on North Korea’s Lyongaksan Machineries and Equipment Export Corporation and Changgwang Sinyong Corporation for missile proliferation activities.*

**April 9, 1992:** North Korea ratifies the safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

**May 4, 1992:** North Korea submits its nuclear material declarations to the IAEA, declaring seven sites and some 90 grams of plutonium that could be subject to IAEA inspection. Pyongyang claims that the nuclear material was the result of reprocessing 89 defective fuel rods in 1989. The IAEA conducted inspections to verify the completeness of this declaration from mid-1992 to early 1993.

**June 23, 1992:** The United States imposes “missile sanctions” on the North Korean entities sanctioned in March.*

**September 1992:** IAEA inspectors discover discrepancies in North Korea’s “initial report” on its nuclear program and ask for clarification on several issues, including the amount of reprocessed plutonium in North Korea.

**1993**

**February 9, 1993:** The IAEA demands special inspections of two sites that are believed to store
nuclear waste. The request is based on strong evidence that North Korea has been cheating on its commitments under the NPT. North Korea refuses the IAEA’s request.

March 12, 1993: Amid demands for special inspections, North Korea announces its intention to withdraw from the NPT in three months, citing Article X provisions that allow withdrawal for supreme national security considerations.

April 1, 1993: The IAEA declares that North Korea is not adhering to its safeguards agreement and that it cannot guarantee that North Korean nuclear material is not being diverted for nonpeaceful uses.

June 11, 1993: Following talks with the United States in New York, North Korea suspends its decision to pull out of the NPT just before the withdrawal would have become legally effective. North Korea also agrees to the full and impartial application of IAEA safeguards.

For its part, the United States grants assurances against the threat and use of force, including nuclear weapons. Washington also promises not to interfere with North Korea’s internal affairs.

July 19, 1993: After a second round of talks with the United States, North Korea announces in a joint statement that it is “prepared to begin consultations with the IAEA on outstanding safeguards and other issues” and that it is ready to negotiate IAEA inspections of its nuclear facilities. The joint statement also indicates that Pyongyang might consider a deal with the United States to replace its graphite nuclear reactors with light-water reactors (LWRs), which are proliferation resistant.

Late 1993: The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Defense Intelligence Agency estimate that North Korea had separated about 12 kilograms of plutonium. This amount is enough for at least one or two nuclear weapons.

1994

January 1994: The director of the CIA estimates that North Korea may have produced one or two nuclear weapons.

February 15, 1994: North Korea finalizes an agreement with the IAEA to allow inspections of all seven of its declared nuclear facilities, averting sanctions by the United Nations Security Council.

March 1, 1994: IAEA inspectors arrive in North Korea for the first inspections since 1993.

March 21, 1994: Responding to North Korea’s refusal to allow the inspection team to inspect a plutonium reprocessing plant at Yongbyon, the IAEA Board of Governors approves a resolution calling on North Korea to “immediately allow the IAEA to complete all requested inspection activities and to comply fully with its safeguards agreements.”

May 19, 1994: The IAEA confirms that North Korea has begun removing spent fuel from its 5-megawatt nuclear research reactor even though international monitors were not present. The United States and the IAEA had insisted that inspectors be present for any such action because spent fuel can potentially be reprocessed for use in nuclear weapons.

June 13, 1994: North Korea announces its withdrawal from the IAEA. This is distinct from pulling out of the NPT—North Korea is still required to undergo IAEA inspections as part of its NPT obligations. The IAEA contends that North Korea’s safeguards agreement remains in force. However, North Korea no longer participates in IAEA functions as a member state.

June 15, 1994: Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter negotiates a deal with North Korea in which Pyongyang confirms its willingness to “freeze” its nuclear weapons program and resume high-level talks with the United States. Bilateral talks are expected to begin, provided that North Korea allows the IAEA safeguards to remain in place, does not refuel its 5-megawatt nuclear reactor, and does not reprocess any spent nuclear fuel.
July 9, 1994: North Korean President Kim Il Sung dies and is succeeded by his son, Kim Jong Il.

August 12, 1994: An “agreed statement” is signed that establishes a three-stage process for the elimination of North Korea’s nuclear weapons program. In return, the United States promises to move toward normalized economic and diplomatic relations and assures North Korea that it will provide assistance with the construction of proliferation-resistant LWRs to replace North Korea’s graphite-moderated reactors.

October 21, 1994: The United States and North Korea conclude four months of negotiations by adopting the “Agreed Framework” in Geneva. To resolve U.S. concerns about Pyongyang’s plutonium-producing reactors and the Yongbyon reprocessing facility, the agreement calls for North Korea to freeze and eventually eliminate its nuclear facilities, a process that will require dismantling three nuclear reactors, two of which are still under construction. North Korea also allows the IAEA to verify compliance through “special inspections,” and it agrees to allow 8,000 spent nuclear reactor fuel elements to be removed to a third country.

In exchange, Pyongyang will receive two LWRs and annual shipments of heavy fuel oil during construction of the reactors. The LWRs will be financed and constructed through the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO), a multinational consortium.

Calling for movement toward full normalization of political and economic relations, the accord also serves as a jumping-off point for U.S.-North Korean dialogue on Pyongyang’s development and export of ballistic missiles, as well as other issues of bilateral concern.

November 28, 1994: The IAEA announces that it had confirmed that construction has been halted at North Korea’s Nyongbyon and Taechon nuclear facilities and that these facilities are not operational.

1995

March 9, 1995: KEDO is formed in New York with the United States, South Korea, and Japan as the organization’s original members.

1996

January 1996: North Korea agrees in principle to a meeting on missile proliferation issues, which had been requested in a letter by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Thomas Hubbard. However, Pyongyang contends that the United States would have to ease economic sanctions before it could agree on a date and venue for the talks.

In testimony before a House International Relations subcommittee on March 19, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Winston Lord says that Washington is willing to ease economic sanctions if progress is made on the missile export issue.

April 21-22, 1996: The United States and North Korea meet in Berlin for their first round of bilateral missile talks. The United States reportedly suggests that North Korea should adhere to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), a voluntary international agreement aimed at controlling sales of ballistic missile systems, components, and technology. North Korea allegedly demands that the United States provide compensation for lost missile-related revenue.

May 24, 1996: The United States imposes sanctions on North Korea and Iran for missile technology-related transfers. The sanctions prohibit any imports or exports to sanctioned firms and to those sectors of the North Korean economy that are considered missile-related. The pre-existing general ban on trade with both countries makes the sanctions largely symbolic.*

October 16, 1996: After detecting North Korean preparations for a test of its medium-range
Nodong missile, the United States deploys a reconnaissance ship and aircraft to Japan. Following several meetings in New York between U.S. and North Korean diplomats, the State Department confirms on November 8 that the missile test has been canceled.

1997

June 11-13, 1997: The second round of U.S.-North Korean missile talks takes place in New York, with U.S. negotiators pressing North Korea not to deploy the Nodong missile and to end sales of Scud missiles and their components. The parties reach no agreement but reportedly lay the foundation for future talks.

August 6, 1997: The United States imposes new sanctions on two additional North Korean entities for unspecified missile-proliferation activities.*

1998

February 25, 1998: At his inaugural speech, South Korean President Kim Dae-jung announces his “sunshine policy,” which strives to improve inter-Korean relations through peace, reconciliation, and cooperation.

April 17, 1998: The United States imposes sanctions on North Korea and Pakistan in response to Pyongyang’s transfer of missile technology and components to Pakistan’s Khan Research Laboratory.*

June 16, 1998: The official Korean Central News Agency reports that Pyongyang will only end its missile technology exports if it is suitably compensated for financial losses.

July 15, 1998: The bipartisan Rumsfeld Commission concludes that the United States may have “little or no warning” before facing a long-range ballistic missile threat from “rogue states,” such as North Korea and Iran.

August 31, 1998: North Korea launches a three-stage Taepo Dong-1 rocket with a range of 1,500-2,000 kilometers that flies over Japan. Pyongyang announces that the rocket successfully placed a small satellite into orbit, a claim contested by U.S. Space Command. Japan suspends signature of a cost-sharing agreement for the Agreed Framework’s LWR project until November 1998. The U.S. intelligence community admits to being surprised by North Korea’s advances in missile-staging technology and its use of a solid-rocket motor for the missile’s third stage.

October 1, 1998: The third round of U.S.-North Korean missile talks begins in New York but makes little progress. The United States repeats its request for Pyongyang to terminate its missile programs in exchange for relief from economic sanctions. North Korea rejects the U.S. proposal on the grounds that the lifting of sanctions is implicit in the 1994 Agreed Framework.


December 4-11, 1998: The United States and North Korea hold talks to address U.S. concerns about a suspected underground nuclear facility at Kumchang-ni. Pyongyang reportedly accepts in principle the idea of a U.S. inspection of the site but is unable to agree with U.S. proposals for “appropriate compensation.”

1999
February 2, 1999: CIA Director George Tenet testifies before the Senate Armed Services Committee that, with some technical improvements, North Korea would be able to use the Taepo Dong-1 to deliver small payloads to parts of Alaska and Hawaii. Tenet also says that Pyongyang’s Taepo Dong-2, if it had a third stage like the Taepo Dong-1, would be able to deliver large payloads to the continental United States, albeit with poor accuracy.

March 29-31, 1999: U.S. and North Korean officials hold a fourth round of missile talks in Pyongyang. The United States again expresses concern over North Korea’s missile development and proliferation activities and proposes a deal exchanging North Korean restraint for U.S. sanctions relief. U.S. officials describe the talks as “serious and intensive” but succeed only in reaching agreement to meet again at an unspecified date.

April 25, 1999: The United States, South Korea, and Japan establish the Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group to institutionalize close consultation and policy coordination in dealing with North Korea.

May 20-24, 1999: A U.S. inspection team visits the North Korean suspected nuclear site in Kumchang-ni. According to the State Department, the team finds no evidence of nuclear activity or violation of the Agreed Framework.

May 25-28, 1999: Traveling to Pyongyang as a presidential envoy, Perry meets with senior North Korean political, diplomatic, and military officials to discuss a major expansion in bilateral relations if Pyongyang is willing to address U.S. security concerns. Perry delivers a letter from President Clinton to North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, but the two do not meet. Perry reportedly calls on North Korea to satisfy U.S. concerns about ongoing nuclear weapons-related activities that are beyond the scope of the Agreed Framework and about ballistic missile development and proliferation in exchange for the lifting of U.S. sanctions, normalization of diplomatic relations, and potentially some form of security guarantee.

September 7-12, 1999: During talks in Berlin, North Korea agrees to a moratorium on testing any long-range missiles for the duration of talks with the United States. The United States agrees to a partial lifting of economic sanctions on North Korea. The two parties agree to continue high-level discussions. (Sanctions are not actually lifted until June 2000.)

September 9, 1999: A U.S. National Intelligence Estimate reports that North Korea will “most likely” develop an ICBM capable of delivering a 200-kilogram warhead to the U.S. mainland by 2015.

September 15, 1999: North Korean policy coordinator Perry submits his review of U.S. policy toward North Korea to Congress and releases an unclassified version of the report on October 12. The report recommends “a new, comprehensive and integrated approach to...negotiations with the [Democratic People’s Republic of Korea] DPRK,” which would involve a coordinated reduction in isolation by the United States and its allies in a “step-by-step and reciprocal fashion.” Potential engagement mechanisms could include the normalization of diplomatic relations and the relaxation of trade sanctions.

November 19, 1999: The United States and North Korea meet in Berlin for talks on bilateral relations and preparations for a North Korean high-level visit to the United States.

December 15, 1999: Five years after the Agreed Framework was signed, KEDO officials sign a turnkey contract with the Korea Electric Power Corporation to begin construction on the two LWRs in Kumho, North Korea. KEDO officials attribute the delay in signing the contract to complex legal and financial challenges and the tense political climate generated by the North Korean Taepo Dong-1 test in August 1998.

2000

April 6, 2000: The United States imposes sanctions on a North Korean firm, Changgwang Sinyong Corporation, for proliferating MTCR Category I items, possibly to Iran. Category I items include...
complete missile systems with ranges exceeding 300 kilometers and payloads over 500 kilograms, major subsystems, rocket stages or guidance systems, production facilities for MTCR-class missiles, or technology associated with such missiles.*

May 25-27, 2000: The United States conducts its second inspection of the Kumchang-ni site. The inspection team found that conditions had not changed since the first inspection in May 1999.

June 15, 2000: Following a historic summit, North and South Korea sign a joint declaration stating they have “agreed to resolve” the question of reunification of the Korean Peninsula. The agreement includes promises to reunite families divided by the Korean War and to pursue other economic and cultural exchanges. No commitments are made regarding nuclear weapons or missile programs or military deployments in the Demilitarized Zone.

June 19, 2000: Apparently encouraged by the North-South summit, the United States relaxes sanctions on North Korea, allowing a “wide range” of trade in commercial and consumer goods, easing restrictions on investment, and eliminating prohibitions on direct personal and commercial financial transactions. Sanctions related to terrorism and missile proliferation remain in place. The next day, North Korea re-affirms its moratorium on missile tests.

July 12, 2000: The fifth round of U.S.-North Korean missile talks in Kuala Lumpur end without resolution. During the meeting, North Korea repeats its demand for compensation, stated as $1 billion per year, in return for halting missile exports. The United States rejects this proposal but says that it is willing to move toward “economic normalization” in return for addressing U.S. concerns.

July 19, 2000: During a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Kim Jong Il reportedly promises to end his country’s missile program in exchange for assistance with satellite launches from countries that have expressed concern about North Korea’s missile program.

July 28, 2000: At the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum in Bangkok, Thailand, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright engages in a “substantively modest” meeting with North Korean Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun, the highest level of exchange to date. Paek gives no additional details about North Korea’s purported offer to end its missile program in return for space-launch assistance.

August 13, 2000: Kim Jong Il tells a meeting of 46 South Korean media executives in Pyongyang that his missile proposal was meant “in humor, while talking about science and state-of-the-art technologies,” according to the Korea Times. The report of the event is widely interpreted as undercutting the seriousness of Kim’s offer; however, English-language excerpts of Kim’s speech seem to confirm the offer: “I told...Putin that we would stop developing rockets when the United States comes forward and launches our satellites.”

August 28, 2000: U.S. Ambassador Wendy Sherman travels to Moscow to confirm the details of Kim Jong Il’s apparent missile proposal with her Russian counterparts. At a September 8 briefing, a senior State Department official says the United States is taking the North Korean offer “very seriously.”

September 27, 2000: U.S.-North Korean talks resume in New York on nuclear issues, missiles, and terrorism. The two countries issue a joint statement on terrorism, a move that indicates progress toward removing North Korea from the State Department’s terrorism list.

October 9-12, 2000: Kim Jong Il’s second-in-command, Vice Marshal Jo Myong Rok, visits Washington as a special envoy. He delivers a letter to President Clinton and meets with the secretaries of state and defense. The move is seen as an affirmation of Kim’s commitment to improving U.S.-North Korean ties.

October 12, 2000: The United States and North Korea issue a joint statement noting that resolution of the missile issue would “make an essential contribution to fundamentally improved relations” and reiterating the two countries’ commitment to implementation of the Agreed Framework. The statement also says that Albright will visit North Korea in the near future to prepare for a possible
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Published on Arms Control Association (https://www.armscontrol.org)

visit by President Clinton.

October 24, 2000: Secretary Albright concludes a two-day visit to Pyongyang to meet with Kim Jong Il. During the visit, Kim says that North Korea would not further test the Taepo Dong-1 missile. In addition to discussing Pyongyang’s indigenous missile program, the talks cover North Korean missile technology exports, nuclear transparency, the normalization of relations, and a possible trip by President Clinton to Pyongyang.

November 1-3, 2000: A seventh round of missile talks between Pyongyang and Washington ends without an agreement in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The failure to build upon the momentum derived from Secretary Albright's recent meeting with Kim Jong-Il diminished hopes of a presidential trip to North Korea before the end of President Clinton's term.

December 28, 2000: President Clinton announces that he will not travel to North Korea before the end of his term, citing "insufficient time to complete the work at hand." According to a March 6 New York Times article, Clinton's national security adviser Sandy Berger was hesitant to have the president leave the country during the presidential election dispute, which he deemed "a potential 'constitutional crisis.'"

2001


March 6, 2001: At a joint press briefing with the Swedish foreign minister, Secretary of State Colin Powell says that the administration “plan[s] to engage with North Korea to pick up where President Clinton left off. Some promising elements were left on the table and we will be examining those elements.”

March 7, 2001: In a New York Times op-ed, Wendy Sherman, former special adviser to the president and secretary of state for North Korea policy, writes that a deal with North Korea to eliminate its medium- and long-range missiles and end its missile exports had been “tantalizingly close” at the end of the Clinton administration.

After a working meeting with South Korean President Kim Dae-jung at the White House, President George W. Bush tells reporters that he “look[s] forward to, at some point in the future, having a dialogue with the North Koreans, but that any negotiation would require complete verification of the terms of a potential agreement.” According to Clinton administration officials, the issue of how to verify a missile deal remained one of the final stumbling blocks to a successful arrangement. Bush also questions whether Pyongyang is “keeping all terms of all agreements.”

Just prior to Bush’s comments, Powell amended his remarks from the previous day, noting that if “there was some suggestion that imminent negotiations are about to begin—that is not the case.”

March 13, 2001: North Korea, apparently reacting to Washington’s new tone, cancels ministerial-level talks with Seoul. The talks were intended to promote further political reconciliation.

March 15, 2001: Pyongyang threatens to “take thousand-fold revenge” on the United States “and its black-hearted intention to torpedo the dialogue between north and south [Korea].” The statement, issued by the Korean Central News Agency, called Washington’s new policies “hostile” and noted that Pyongyang remains “fully prepared for both dialogue and war.”

May 3, 2001: At a press conference in Pyongyang, a European Union delegation headed by Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson reports that Kim Jong Il pledged that he will extend Pyongyang’s moratorium on missile testing until 2003 and that Kim was “committed” to a second inter-Korean summit.

June 6, 2001: In a press release, President Bush announces the completion of his administration’s
North Korea policy review and its determination that “serious discussions” on a “broad agenda” should be resumed with Pyongyang. Bush states his desire to conduct “comprehensive” negotiations, including “improved implementation of the Agreed Framework,” “verifiable constraints” on North Korea’s missile programs, a ban on North Korea’s missile exports, and “a less threatening conventional military posture.”

June 13, 2001: U.S. Special Envoy Jack Pritchard meets in New York with the North Korean representative to the UN, Hyong-ch’ol Yi, to make arrangements for bilateral talks.

June 26, 2001: The State Department announces sanctions under the Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000 on North Korea’s Changgwang Sinyong Corporation, for unspecified missile-related transfers to Iran. The announcement represents the second time that sanctions had been imposed under the act, the first also being on Changgwang Sinyong on January 2.

The sanctions prohibit any U.S. entity from doing business with the North Korean firm, which has been punished several times previously under more general missile transfer sanctions. However, the sanctions are largely symbolic, as Changgwang Sinyong is still subject to the active sanctions imposed on January 2, 2001, and missile sanctions that were imposed on April 6, 2000.*

July 6, 2001: Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage confirms that North Korea tested a rocket “motor engine” in late June, but that there was “nothing in itself wrong with that,” nor did the administration consider the test to have violated Pyongyang’s testing moratorium.

August 4, 2001: During a meeting in Moscow with President Putin, Kim Jong Il reaffirms his pledge to maintain a moratorium on ballistic missile flight-tests until 2003.

2002

January 29, 2002: In his State of the Union address, President Bush criticized North Korea for “ arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction, while starving its citizens.” Bush characterized North Korea, along with Iraq and Iran, as constituting an “axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world.”

February 5, 2002: At a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, Powell reiterates the administration’s policy that it is willing to resume a dialogue with North Korea at "any time, any place, or anywhere without any preconditions." Powell also confirms that the administration believes that Pyongyang continues to "comply with the [missile flight-test] moratorium they placed upon themselves and stay within the KEDO agreement," which is also known as the Agreed Framework.

March 15, 2002: Following reports that the U.S. nuclear posture review discusses the use of nuclear weapons against North Korea, Pyongyang’s state-run press organ announces that, if the United States "tries to use nuclear weapons" against North Korea, it will be compelled to "examine all the agreements" reached with the United States. The report says that, "if the U.S. inflicts nuclear holocaust upon [North Korea], the former’s mainland will not be safe either."

April 1, 2002: President Bush issues a memorandum stating that he will not certify North Korea’s compliance with the Agreed Framework. However, for national security considerations, Bush waives applicable U.S. law prohibiting Washington from funding KEDO, allowing the United States to continue financially supporting the Agreed Framework.

July 2, 2002: The United States cancels a planned delegation visit to North Korea, citing Pyongyang’s failure to respond to a proposed July 10 meeting date, as well as a June 29 naval skirmish between North and South Korea.

July 31, 2002: Powell meets briefly with Foreign Minister Paek Nam Sun during the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum meeting in Brunei, generating speculation that a U.S. envoy will visit North Korea. It is the highest-level exchange between the two countries since the Bush administration took office.
August 7, 2002: KEDO holds a ceremony to mark the pouring of the concrete foundation for the first LWR that the United States agreed to provide North Korea under the Agreed Framework. Jack Pritchard, the U.S. representative to KEDO and State Department special envoy for negotiations with North Korea, attends the ceremony. Pritchard is the most senior U.S. official to visit North Korea since former Secretary of State Albright in October 2000.

The United States urges North Korea to comply with IAEA safeguarding procedures for all its nuclear facilities as soon as possible, but Pyongyang states that it will not do so for at least three years, the Japanese newspaper Nihon Keizai Shimbun reports August 8. A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman also states that delays in completing the reactor project might motivate Pyongyang to pull out of the agreement.

August 16, 2002: The United States imposes sanctions on Changgwang Sinyong Corporation of North Korea and on the North Korean government itself for transferring missile technology to Yemen. White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer states August 23 that the sanctions were a “pro forma requirement under the law for the State Department” and that Washington remains willing to “talk with North Korea any time, any place.”

August 31, 2002: Responding to an August 29 speech by Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Bolton, North Korea says that “if the U.S. has a will to drop its hostile policy toward the DPRK it will have dialogue...the ball is in the court of the U.S. side.” Bolton had criticized Pyongyang’s missile, nuclear, and biological weapons programs.

September 17, 2002: North Korea announces that it will indefinitely extend its moratorium on missile testing as part of the North Korea-Japan Pyongyang Declaration signed during a meeting between Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.

A portion of the North Korea-Japan declaration references nuclear weapons, saying that the two countries “affirmed the pledge to observe all the international agreements for a comprehensive solution to the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula.” It is unclear whether this statement simply affirms a commitment to existing agreements or signals support for additional arms control measures.

October 3-5, 2002: James Kelly, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, visits North Korea. The highest-ranking administration official to visit Pyongyang, Kelly reiterates U.S. concerns about North Korea’s nuclear and missile programs, export of missile components, conventional force posture, human rights violations, and humanitarian situation. Kelly informs North Korea that it could improve bilateral relations through a “comprehensive settlement” addressing these issues. No future meetings are announced.

Referring to Kelly’s approach as “high handed and arrogant,” North Korea argues that the U.S. policy “compels the DPRK to take all necessary countermeasures, pursuant to the army-based policy whose validity has been proven.”

October 16, 2002: The United States announces that North Korea admitted to having a clandestine program to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons after James Kelly, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, confronted representatives from Pyongyang during an October 3-5 visit. Kelly later explained that the North Korean admission came the day after he informed them that the United States was aware of the program. North Korea has denied several times that it admitted to having this program.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher states that "North Korea’s secret nuclear weapons program is a serious violation of North Korea’s commitments under the Agreed Framework as well as under the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, its International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards agreement, and the Joint North-South Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." Boucher also says that the United States wants North Korea to comply with its nonproliferation commitments and seeks "a peaceful resolution of this situation."
November 5, 2002: North Korea threatens to end its moratorium on ballistic missile tests if North Korea-Japan normalization talks do not achieve progress.

November 14, 2002: KEDO announces that it is suspending heavy-fuel oil deliveries to North Korea in response to Pyongyang's October 4 acknowledgment that it has a uranium-enrichment program. The last shipment reached North Korea November 18.

November 29, 2002: The IAEA adopts a resolution calling upon North Korea to "clarify" its "reported uranium-enrichment program." North Korea rejects the resolution, saying the IAEA's position is biased in favor of the United States.

December 9, 2002: Spanish and U.S. forces intercept and search a ship carrying a shipment of North Korean Scud missiles and related cargo to Yemen. The United States allows the shipment to be delivered because it lacks the necessary legal authority to seize the cargo. White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer says that Washington had intelligence that the ship was carrying missiles to the Middle East and was concerned that its ultimate destination might have been Iraq.

December 12, 2002: North Korea sends a letter to the IAEA announcing that it is restarting its one functional reactor and is reopening the other nuclear facilities frozen under the Agreed Framework. The letter requests that the IAEA remove the seals and monitoring equipment from its nuclear facilities. A North Korean spokesman blames the United States for violating the Agreed Framework and says that the purpose of restarting the reactor is to generate electricity—an assertion disputed by U.S. officials.

A November 27 Congressional Research Service report states that the reactor could annually produce enough plutonium for one bomb. The CIA states in a 2002 report to Congress that the spent-fuel rods "contain enough plutonium for several more [nuclear] weapons."

U.S. estimates on North Korea's current nuclear status differ. A State Department official said January 3, 2003 that the U.S. intelligence community believes North Korea already possesses one or two nuclear weapons made from plutonium produced before the negotiation of the Agreed Framework. The CIA publicly estimates that Pyongyang "has produced enough plutonium" for one or two weapons.

December 14, 2002: North Korea states in a letter to the IAEA that the status of its nuclear facilities is a matter between the United States and North Korea and "not pursuant to any agreement" with the IAEA. The letter further declares that North Korea will take unilateral action to remove seals and monitoring cameras if the IAEA does not act.

December 22-24, 2002: North Korea cuts all seals and disrupts IAEA surveillance equipment on its nuclear facilities and materials. An IAEA spokesman says December 26 that North Korea started moving fresh fuel rods into the reactor, suggesting that it might be restarted soon.

December 27, 2002: North Korea orders IAEA inspectors out of the country. They leave on December 31.

2003

January 6, 2003: The IAEA Board of Governors adopts a resolution condemning North Korea's decision to restart its nuclear reactor and resume operation of its related facilities. The resolution "deplores" North Korea's action "in the strongest terms" and calls on Pyongyang to meet "immediately, as a first step" with IAEA officials. It also calls on North Korea to re-establish the seals and monitoring equipment it dismantled, comply fully with agency safeguards, clarify details about its reported uranium-enrichment program, and allow the agency to verify that all North Korea's nuclear material is "declared and...subject to safeguards."

January 10, 2003: North Korea announces its withdrawal from the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), effective January 11. Although Article X of the NPT requires that a country give three months’
notice in advance of withdrawing, North Korea argues that it has satisfied that requirement because it originally announced its decision to withdraw March 12, 1993, and suspended the decision one day before it was to become legally binding.

January 12, 2003: Choe Jin Su, North Korea’s ambassador to China, signals that Pyongyang might not adhere to its moratorium on testing long-range missiles, saying that Pyongyang believes it “cannot go along with the self-imposed missile moratorium any longer,” according to a January 12 Los Angeles Times article.

February 12, 2003: Responding to North Korea’s rejection of the November 2002 and January 2003 IAEA resolutions, the IAEA Board of Governors adopts a resolution declaring Pyongyang in “further non-compliance” with its obligations under the NPT. The board decides to report the matter to the UN Security Council, in accordance with agency mandates.

February 27, 2003: U.S. officials confirm North Korea has restarted the five-megawatt nuclear reactor that had been frozen by the Agreed Framework.

March 19, 2003: North Korea again signals that it might not adhere to its moratorium on testing long-range missiles, asserting in a March 19 KCNA statement that it has the “sovereign right” to have a “peaceful” missile program. North Korea conducted missile tests February 24 and March 10, but both tests involved short-range missiles that did not violate the moratorium.

March 24, 2003: The United States imposes sanctions on the Changgwang Sinyong Corporation of North Korea for transferring missile technology to Khan Research Laboratories in Pakistan. The laboratory was sanctioned for receiving the items. Philip Reeker, deputy State Department spokesman, said April 1 that the sanctions were imposed only for a “missile-related transfer” and not the transfer of nuclear technology from Pakistan to North Korea.

April 23-25, 2003: The United States, North Korea, and China hold trilateral talks in Beijing. North Korea tells the U.S. delegation that it possesses nuclear weapons, according to Boucher on April 28. This constitutes the first time that Pyongyang has made such an admission.

North Korea also tells the U.S. delegation that it has completed reprocessing the spent nuclear fuel from the five-megawatt reactor frozen under the Agreed Framework, according to Secretary of State Colin Powell during an April 30 hearing before the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Boucher adds that the North Korean delegation told the U.S. officials that Pyongyang “might get rid of all their nuclear programs...[and] stop their missile exports.” Powell states April 28 that North Korea expects “something considerable in return” for this effort.

May 12, 2003
North Korea accuses the United States of violating the spirit of the 1992 Joint North-South Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, calling the agreement a “dead document” in a KCNA statement.

July 15, 2003
State Department spokesman Richard Boucher tells reporters that North Korean officials at their UN mission in New York have told U.S. officials that North Korea has completed reprocessing the 8,000 spent fuel rods from its Yongbyon reactor.

August 27-29, 2003
The first round of six-party talks is held in Beijing. The talks achieve no significant breakthroughs.

North Korea proposes a step-by-step solution, calling for the United States to conclude a “non-aggression treaty,” normalize bilateral diplomatic relations, refrain from hindering North Korea’s “economic cooperation” with other countries, complete the reactors promised under the Agreed Framework, resume suspended fuel oil shipments, and increase food aid. Pyongyang states that, in return, it will dismantle its “nuclear facility,” as well as end missile testing and export of missiles and related components. North Korea issues an explicit denial for the first time that it has a uranium-
enrichment program.

The North Korean delegation, however, also threatens to test nuclear weapons or “demonstrate the means that they would have to deliver” them, according to a senior State Department official.

**September 14, 2003:** President George W. Bush agrees to waive the restrictions on U.S. funding to KEDO but only pledges to provide $3.72 million solely for administrative expenses. The United States does not provide any further funding for KEDO after 2003.

**October 2, 2003**
KCNA reports a statement from a North Korean Foreign Ministry official indicating that North Korea completed reprocessing its 8,000 spent fuel rods and “made a switchover in the use” of the spent fuel “in the direction increasing [sic] its nuclear deterrent force.” The official also states that Pyongyang will continue to produce and reprocess additional spent fuel when deemed necessary.

**October 16, 2003**
A statement from a North Korean Foreign Ministry official reported by KCNA suggests that Pyongyang may test nuclear weapons, stating that it will “take a measure to open its nuclear deterrent to the public as a physical force” if the United States refuses to change its negotiating stance.

**October 19, 2003**
President George W. Bush states during a trip to Asia that the United States is willing to provide a written, multilateral guarantee that the United States will not attack North Korea, but makes it clear that a formal nonaggression pact is “off the table.” Powell made a similar statement August 1.

**November 6, 2003:** North Korean ambassador to the United Kingdom, Ri Yong Ho, tells Reuters that North Korea possesses a workable nuclear device.

**November 21, 2003**
The KEDO Executive Board announces that it will suspend construction of two light-water nuclear reactors for one year beginning December 1. The Board adds that the project’s future “will be assessed and decided by the Executive Board before the expiration of the suspension period.” Department of State spokesperson Adam Ereli said November 5, however, that Bush administration believes there is “no future for the project.”

**2004**

**January 8, 2004**
North Korea allows an unofficial U.S. delegation to visit its nuclear facilities at Yongbyon and displays what it calls its “nuclear deterrent.” North Korean officials allow delegation member Siegfried Hecker—a senior fellow at the Los Alamos National Laboratory—to handle a jar containing what appears to be plutonium metal. North Korean officials claim that it came from reprocessing the spent fuel rods from its five-megawatt reactor.

The delegation also visits the spent fuel cooling pond that had been monitored under the Agreed Framework and observes that the rods have been removed. The North Korean officials tell the delegation that Pyongyang reprocessed all of the spent fuel rods between January and June 2003.

Hecker later tells the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that he does not know for certain that the substance was plutonium and that he could not determine when it was produced.

**February 25-28, 2004**
A second round of six-party talks takes place in Beijing. Little progress is made, although both sides agree to hold another round of talks before the end of June 2004, as well as a working group meeting to be held beforehand.

South Korea’s deputy foreign minister, Lee Soo-hyuck, issues a proposal—which China and Russia
both support—to provide energy assistance to the North in return for a freeze of its nuclear program, along with a promise to dismantle it.

Wang Yi, China’s envoy to the six-party talks, states afterwards that “sharp” differences remain between Washington and Pyongyang. According to the Japanese Foreign Ministry, two specific issues divide North Korea and other participants. The first is that the United States, Japan, and South Korea want all of North Korea’s nuclear programs to be dismantled, but North Korea wishes to be allowed to retain one for “peaceful purposes.” The second is that Washington and the other two governments want Pyongyang to acknowledge that it has a uranium-enrichment program.

**June 23-26, 2004:** A third round of six-party talks is held in Beijing. The United States presents a detailed proposal for resolving the crisis.

The proposal calls for a two-phase process in which North Korea would receive fuel oil from China, South Korea, and Russia after agreeing to first freeze, then dismantle its nuclear programs. The United States and the other parties to the talks would also draft a multilateral security agreement and begin surveying North Korea’s energy needs. Additionally, Washington would begin bilateral discussions with Pyongyang on the removal of U.S. sanctions. The benefits spelled out in the proposal could be withdrawn if North Korea did not comply.

According to a June 28 North Korean Foreign Ministry statement, North Korea counters by proposing to “refrain from” producing, testing, or transferring nuclear weapons and to freeze “all the facilities related to nuclear weapons and products churned out by their operation.” According to the Foreign Ministry, the length of the freeze depends on “whether reward is made or not.”

**November 26, 2004:** The KEDO Executive Board announces that it will extend its suspension of the light-water reactor project for another year, beginning December 1.

**2005**

**February 2, 2005:** *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* report that Libya received uranium hexafluoride suspected to be of North Korean origin in 2004. Several knowledgeable U.S. and other diplomatic sources later tell *Arms Control Today* that the evidence indicates, but does not prove, that the material originated in North Korea.

**February 10, 2005:** North Korea’s Foreign Ministry announces that Pyongyang has “produced nuclear weapons.” This was Pyongyang’s most definitive public claim to date on the status of its nuclear arsenal.

**February 21, 2005:** Seoul’s semi-official Yonhap News Agency reports that South Korea’s defense minister, Yoon Kwang-ung, tells a National Assembly Committee that North Korea has reprocessed “only part” of the 8,000 spent fuel rods from the Yongbyon reactor.

**March 2, 2005:** North Korea’s Foreign Ministry states that Pyongyang is no longer bound by its more than five-year-old moratorium on flight-testing longer-range missiles. Pyongyang, however, does not say it will resume such testing.

**Early April, 2005:** The United States sends an urgent diplomatic message to allies notifying them of U.S. concerns that North Korea might conduct a nuclear test.

**April 9, 2005:** North Korea expert Selig Harrison tells reporters that, during a recent meeting, North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan said Pyongyang might give nuclear weapons to terrorists if “the United States drives us into a corner.”

**May 11, 2005:** North Korea’s Foreign Ministry announces that it has “successfully finished the
unloading of 8,000 spent fuel rods” from its Yongbyon reactor. South Korea has verified the reactor shutdown “through various channels,” Foreign Affairs and Trade Ministry official Kim Sook tells the Korean Broadcasting System the same day.

**June 2005:** Pyongyang refuels its reactor at Yongbyon and begins reprocessing the 8,000 spent fuel rods removed in March, North Korean officials later tell Hecker.

**June 29, 2005:** The U.S. Treasury Department announces that the United States has frozen the U.S. assets of three North Korean entities “responsible for WMD and missile programs,” as well as barred U.S. citizens and companies from doing business with those entities. Those measures are taken pursuant to Executive Order 13382 issued that day by President George W. Bush.

**July 9, 2005:** After a meeting between U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Christopher Hill and North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan, North Korea announces its return to the six-party talks. According to a KCNA statement, the “U.S. side clarified its official stand to recognize [North Korea] as a sovereign state, not to invade it and hold bilateral talks within the framework of the six-party talks.”

**July 13, 2005:** During a meeting with an envoy of Chinese President Hu Jintao, North Korean Leader Kim Jong Il reiterates his father’s [Kim Il Sung] apparent dying wish for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, according to KCNA.

**July 26, 2005:** A new round of six-party talks begins in Beijing. The talks include an unprecedented number of U.S.-North Korean bilateral talks. While North Korea continued to deny that it has a “uranium-based nuclear weapons program,” Pyongyang suggested that it would “clarify” any relevant “credible information or evidence” presented by the United States in that regard.

The participants agree August 7 to recess for several weeks. The talks resume September 13.

**September 15, 2005:** The Department of the Treasury designates a Macau bank, Banco Delta Asia, as a “primary money laundering concern” under Section 311 of the USA PATRIOT Act, freezing about $25 million in North Korean funds. A department press release states that the bank has provided services to North Korean “government agencies and front companies,” adding that “[e]vidence exists that some of these agencies and front companies are engaged in illicit activities,” such as drug trafficking. The bank also has also circulated North Korean-produced counterfeit U.S. currency, the press release alleges.

**September 19, 2005:** The participants in the six-party talks conclude a joint statement of principles to guide future negotiations.

According to the statement, North Korea commits “to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs and returning, at an early date, to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to IAEA safeguards.” It also calls for the 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, which forbids the two Koreas from possessing uranium-enrichment and plutonium-separation facilities, to be “observed and implemented.” Washington affirms in the statement that it has no intention to attack or invade North Korea.

The statement commits the participants to achieving “the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner” and says that the parties agree “to take coordinated steps to implement” the agreed-upon obligations and rewards “in a phased manner in line with the principle of ‘commitment for commitment, action for action.’”

The statement says that North Korea “stated that it has the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy” and that the other parties “expressed their respect and agreed to discuss, at an appropriate time, the subject of the provision” of a light-water nuclear power reactor to Pyongyang. This issue had been controversial during the negotiations and the final agreement was the result of a compromise between Washington and Pyongyang. North Korea insisted that the statement recognize its right to a peaceful nuclear energy program and commit the other participants to provide it with light-water reactors while the United States argued that North Korea should not receive any nuclear reactors.
September 20, 2005: North Korea’s Foreign Ministry states that it is “essential” for the United States to provide light-water reactors to Pyongyang “as early as possible,” adding that Washington “should not even dream” that North Korea will dismantle its “nuclear deterrent” before receiving the reactors. However, a speech from North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Choe Su Hon two days later appears to back away from this formulation.

October 20, 2005: Democratic New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, who visited North Korea earlier in the month, says North Korean officials told him they had reprocessed the 8,000 spent fuel rods from the Yongbyon reactor, the Associated Press reports.

October 21, 2005: The Treasury Department announces that it has sanctioned eight North Korean entities pursuant to Executive Order 13382 for their unspecified “involvement” in the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons or related delivery vehicles. The action freezes the entities’ U.S. assets and prohibits transactions between these entities and any U.S. citizens or companies. The department had similarly designated those entities’ parent companies in June.

November 9-11, 2005: The fifth round of the six-party talks begins in Beijing.

South Korea and Japan present concrete plans for implementing the September statement. Both countries propose that the participants separate outstanding issues into three categories: the dismantlement of Pyongyang's nuclear program, provision of economic and energy assistance to North Korea, and Pyongyang’s bilateral issues with Washington and Tokyo.

Disagreements between Washington and Pyongyang continue to block progress. The North Korean delegation focuses almost exclusively on the funds frozen by the September Banco Delta Asia designation.

December 19, 2005: North Korea announces that it will “pursue” the construction of larger “graphite-moderated reactors,” an apparent reference to the two reactors whose construction had been frozen under the Agreed Framework in Pyongyang’s most definitive public statement on the matter.

2006

March 7, 2006: Officials from the U.S. Treasury Department brief North Korea’s deputy director-general for North America, Li Gun, as well as other North Korean officials about the U.S. actions taken with respect to Banco Delta Asia. Li tells reporters afterward that his delegation proposed several methods for resolving U.S. concerns, South Korea’s semi-official Yonhap News Agency reports. Among them was a suggestion to form a joint U.S.-North Korean consultative committee of experts that would discuss such issues as counterfeiting and money laundering.

March 17, 2006: Department of State spokesperson Adam Ereli indicates during a press briefing that issues related to North Korea’s financial system could potentially be discussed in the six-party talks.

March 30, 2006: The Treasury Department announces that it has imposed penalties on a Swiss company, along with one of its owners, for procuring “goods with weapons-related applications” for North Korea.

April 13, 2006: North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan tells reporters that Pyongyang would return to the talks if the United States lifted the freeze of Banco Delta Asia’s funds, which total approximately $25 million.

June 1, 2006: The KEDO Executive Board announces that it has formally terminated its project to build two light-water nuclear reactors in North Korea.

The board says its decision was based on the “continued and extended failure” of North Korea to
comply with its relevant obligations under the 1994 Agreed Framework.

According to South Korea’s Unification Ministry, KEDO’s executive board adopted a resolution the previous day saying that Seoul is to “cover the costs arising from the liquidation process,” of the KEDO assets, such as resolving compensation claims from subcontractors. In return, the government-owned Korea Electric Power Corp., the prime contractor for the reactor project, would gain ownership over reactor “equipment and materials” located outside of North Korea. The fate of assets remaining in North Korea, such as vehicles and construction equipment, is unclear.

July 4-5, 2006: North Korea test fires seven ballistic missiles, including its longest-range missile, the Taepo Dong-2. The other six tests include a combination of short- and medium-range Scud-C and Nodong ballistic missiles, launched from the Kittaraeyong test site. Although the tests of the six short-range missiles appear to be successful, the Taepo Dong-2 fails less than a minute after launch.

A July 4 State Department press statement describes the launches as a “provocative act” that violated North Korea’s voluntary moratorium on flight-testing longer-range missiles, which Pyongyang had observed since September 1999.

Japan and South Korea punish North Korea for conducting the tests, with Tokyo imposing sanctions on Pyongyang and Seoul halting food and fertilizer assistance.

July 15, 2006: The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 1695 condemning North Korea’s missile launches. The resolution calls on Pyongyang to return to the six-party talks and “demands” that the country suspend its ballistic-missile activities and re-establish its flight-testing moratorium.

The resolution also requires states to prevent missiles and related “items, materials, goods and technology” from being transferred to North Korea’s missile or weapons of mass destruction programs. In addition, it requires countries to prevent the procurement of such items from Pyongyang and the transfer of any “financial resources in relation to” North Korea’s weapons programs.

North Korea’s Foreign Ministry states the next day that Pyongyang will “not be bound” by the resolution.

September 19, 2006: Japan and Australia announce that they have adopted sanctions targeting multiple foreign entities tied to North Korea’s ballistic missile and nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons programs in response to resolution 1695.

The two countries each punish the same 12 organizations, as well as a Swiss citizen. All entities are already subject to similar U.S. sanctions. Japan also sanctions three additional institutions.

October 3, 2006: North Korea’s Foreign Ministry issues a statement asserting that Pyongyang “will in the future conduct a nuclear test under the condition where safety is firmly guaranteed.” Apparently signaling a degree of restraint, the statement also says that North Korea will refrain from the first-use of nuclear weapons, “strictly prohibit any …nuclear transfer,” and “do its utmost to realize the denuclearization of the [Korean] peninsula.”

October 9, 2006: North Korea conducts an underground nuclear test near the village of P’unggye. Most early analyses of the test based on seismic data collected by South Korean, Japanese, and U.S. institutes estimates the yield to be below one kiloton. Russian estimates differed significantly, and Foreign Minister Sergei Ivanov said Oct. 10 that the estimated yield was between 5 and 15 kilotons.

October 11, 2006: North Korea’s Foreign Ministry states that its “nuclear test was entirely attributable to the US nuclear threat, sanctions and pressure,” adding that North Korea “was compelled to substantially prove its possession of nukes to protect its sovereignty.” The statement also indicates that North Korea might conduct further nuclear tests if the United States “increases pressure” on the country.

However, the Foreign Ministry also says that North Korea remains committed to implementing the
September 2005 joint statement, arguing that the test “constitutes a positive measure for its implementation.” Additionally, Pyongyang “still remains unchanged in its will to denuclearize the peninsula through dialogue and negotiations,” the Foreign Ministry statement says, adding that the “denuclearization of the entire peninsula was President Kim Il Sung’s last instruction and an ultimate goal” of North Korea.

**October 14, 2006:** The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 1718. The measure demands that North Korea refrain from further nuclear tests and calls on Pyongyang to return to the six-party talks and abandon its nuclear weapons. It also imposes additional sanctions on commerce with Pyongyang, widening the range of prohibited transactions beyond those banned under Resolution 1695.

**November 28-December 1, 2006:** The Chinese, North Korean, South Korean, and U.S. envoys to the six-party talks hold consultations in Beijing to discuss resuming the fifth round of talks. During the consultations, North Korean envoy Kim Gye Gwan states that North Korea is ready to implement the September 19, 2005 joint statement and abandon its nuclear program, but would not do so “unilaterally.”

**December 18-22, 2006:** The fifth round of six-party talks resumes in Beijing. The United States presents a multistage denuclearization plan, but the talks make no progress towards implementing the September 19, 2005 joint statement—in part due to continued disagreements regarding the North Korean funds frozen by the United States in Banco Delta Asia. The parties agree to meet again “at the earliest opportunity.”

**2007**

**February 8-13, 2007:** The six-party talks concludes its fifth round with an agreed “action plan” of initial steps to implement the September 19, 2005 joint statement on North Korea’s denuclearization.

According to the action plan, North Korea is to halt the operation of its nuclear facilities at Yongbyon during a 60-day initial phase in return for an initial shipment of 50,000 tons of heavy-fuel oil.

The action plan also establishes five working groups to “discuss and formulate specific plans” regarding: economic and energy cooperation; denuclearization; implementation of a “Northeast Asia Peace and Security Mechanism;” North Korean relations with the United States; and North Korean relations with Japan.

The statement indicates that, following the shutdown of North Korea’s nuclear facilities at Yongbyon, Pyongyang is to provide a complete declaration of all of its nuclear programs and disable all of its existing nuclear facilities in return for an additional 950,000 tons of heavy-fuel oil or its equivalent.

In addition to helping to provide energy aid to North Korea, the United States agrees to begin the process of removing Pyongyang from its list of state sponsors of terrorism and to stop the application of the Trading with the Enemy Act toward North Korea.

**March 13-14, 2007:** IAEA Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei visits North Korea and meets with three officials, including the head of the North Korean General Department of Atomic Energy, Ri Je Son. During the meetings, ElBaradei invites North Korea to return to the IAEA as a member state and discusses the agency’s monitoring and verification role during the implementation of a February 13 six-party talks agreement.

**March 19-22, 2007:** The sixth round of six-party talks begins in Beijing. The discussions are suspended when North Korean negotiators fly home after four days, explaining that they will not participate until the United States transfers $25 million in frozen North Korean funds held in Banco Delta Asia.

On March 19, Treasury Department Deputy Assistant Secretary for Terrorist Financing and Financial
Chronology of U.S.-North Korean Nuclear and Missile Diplomacy
Published on Arms Control Association (https://www.armscontrol.org)

Crimes Daniel Glaser announces that the two countries had “reached an understanding” regarding the frozen funds, with Washington accepting a North Korean proposal that the funds would be transferred to a North Korean account in the Bank of China in Beijing. North Korea also pledges that the funds “will be used solely for the betterment of the North Korean people, including for humanitarian and educational purposes.”

April 10, 2007: The United States agrees to unfreeze the $25 million in North Korean funds frozen in its Banco Delta Asia account. U.S. officials insist, meanwhile, that North Korea, “live up to the assurances that these funds will be used for the betterment of the North Korean people and for humanitarian purposes.”

June 25, 2007: A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman confirms that the Banco Delta Asia funds were transferred to Pyongyang and that North Korea would begin shutting down its Yongbyon nuclear facilities. An IAEA delegation led by Deputy Director-General for safeguards Ollie Heinonen arrives in Pyongyang the following day to discuss the verification procedures for the shutdown.

July 16, 2007: The IAEA confirms the shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities.

July 18-20, 2007: The six-party talks reconvenes its sixth round in Beijing. The meeting concludes with a joint communique indicating that the five working groups will all meet by the end of August in preparation for another round of plenary talks in September.

September 6, 2007: Israel carries out an air-strike destroying a Syrian facility of an undetermined purpose. Early press reports quoting unnamed U.S. officials suggest that the target of the airstrike was a nuclear facility under construction with North Korean assistance. Days after the strike, Syrian officials deny that the facility was nuclear related, while Israeli and U.S. officials only confirm that an air-strike was carried out. In the following months, Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill states on several occasions that he has raised the issue of the Syrian facility with North Korea. U.S. officials later indicate that the facility was believed to have been a nearly completed nuclear reactor modeled on the North Korean nuclear reactor at Yongbyon.

September 11-14, 2007: A team of Chinese, Russian, and U.S. experts visit North Korea to examine the Yongbyon nuclear facilities to determine the steps necessary to disable them. The experts team agrees on a draft disablement plan with North Korean officials which is to be considered by the next plenary meeting of the six-party talks.

September 27-October 3, 2007: The sixth round of six-party talks meets to discuss how to proceed with the second phase of the February 13 agreement. On October 3, the participants issue a joint statement in which North Korea agrees that, by December 31, it would provide a “complete and correct declaration of all its nuclear programs – including clarification regarding the uranium issue,” and disable its Yongbyon nuclear facilities. Pyongyang also agrees to disable all other nuclear facilities subject to the September 2005 joint statement and not to transfer nuclear material or technology abroad.

In return, the six-parties agree that North Korea would receive the remaining 900,000 tons of heavy-fuel oil or its equivalent pledged in the February 13 agreement.

The United States also agrees that it will fulfill its commitments to begin removing North Korea from its list of state sponsors of terrorism and “advance the process of terminating the application of the Trading with the Enemy Act” toward North Korea “in parallel with” North Korea’s denuclearization actions.

October 2-4, 2007: South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun travels to Pyongyang to meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong II to discuss prospects for reconciliation and economic cooperation. It is the second time in history that such summit-level discussions have been held.

The summit concludes with a an eight-point joint declaration in which both sides agree to take steps toward reunification, ease military tensions, expand meetings of separated families, and engage in social and cultural exchanges. The declaration also expresses a “shared understanding” by the two
countries “on the need for ending the current armistice mechanism and building a permanent peace mechanism.”

**November 5, 2007:** A team of U.S. experts arrives in North Korea to begin leading the disablement of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities. The disablement process consists of 11 agreed steps to be completed by the December 31 deadline stipulated in the October 3 agreement. Funding for the disablement process is provided by the State Department’s Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund (NDF), which is ordinarily reserved for short-term emergency nonproliferation needs.

**December 19, 2007:** Grand National Party candidate Lee Myung-bak is elected president of South Korea, ushering in the first conservative government in Seoul in 10 years. During his campaign, Lee pledged to review the “Sunshine policy” of short-term reconciliation with North Korea adopted by his two predecessors, instead favoring the application of greater pressure on Pyongyang to denuclearize.

**December 21, 2007:** *The Washington Post* reports that U.S. technical teams discovered traces of enriched uranium on aluminum tubes North Korea shared with U.S. officials in November. According to the report, it is unclear whether the contamination originated in North Korea as a result of uranium enrichment carried out by Pyongyang, or if North Korea imported materials which were contaminated abroad and placed these materials in close proximity to the aluminum tubes.

2008

**January 2, 2008:** Following a December 31, 2007 deadline for North Korea to provide a complete and correct declaration on its nuclear programs and disable its Yongbyon nuclear facilities, State Department spokesman Sean McCormack indicates that “some technical questions about the cooling of the fuel rods” was the reason behind the failure to meet the year-end deadline for disablement. He added that Washington would continue to press Pyongyang for its nuclear declaration.

**January 4, 2008:** KCNA releases a North Korean Foreign Ministry statement declaring that North Korea “worked out a report on the nuclear declaration in November last year and notified the U.S. side of its contents.” The statement also accuses the other parties of falling behind on their commitments under an October 2007 agreement, including delays in the delivery of heavy-fuel oil to North Korea. Pyongyang indicated that it would slow down the disablement process in response to delays in the delivery of energy assistance.

**February 6, 2008:** Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill testifies before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and indicates that, in the Fall of 2007, North Korea showed U.S. officials two conventional weapons systems it claimed were the recipients of the thousands of aluminum tubes Pyongyang imported years ago which raised suspicions of a uranium enrichment program. He informs the committee that while the tubes did not work with one of these systems, the U.S. government accepts that the tubes were currently being used for a second conventional weapons system.

Hill also requests from Congress a limited waiver of 1994 Glenn amendment sanctions imposed on North Korea following its nuclear test in 2006. These sanctions, which prohibit the provision of non-humanitarian assistance to non-nuclear-weapon states which have detonated a nuclear weapon, prevent the National Nuclear Security Administration from carrying out work to dismantle the Yongbyon nuclear facilities.

**February 25, 2008:** South Korean President-elect Lee Myung-bak is inaugurated.

**March 13-14, 2008:** Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill and North Korea Vice-Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan meet in Geneva to discuss ways to make progress on North Korea’s declaration, including the consideration of a compromise approach to the declaration format. Press reports from the Yonhap News Agency and *The Washington Times* suggest that compromise proposals would include a formal North Korean declaration on its plutonium program, while the uranium enrichment question and the issue of proliferation would be addressed separately. The
meeting ends inconclusively.

April 8, 2008: Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill and North Korea Vice-Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan meet in Singapore for additional discussions on the North Korean nuclear declaration. The two envoys reportedly reached a compromise agreement on the North Korean nuclear declaration which would entail North Korea’s accounting of its plutonium-based nuclear weapons program and its acknowledgment of U.S. allegations regarding its proliferation and uranium enrichment activities.

April 24, 2008: U.S. administration and intelligence officials brief Congress and the public regarding their assessment that the Syrian facility destroyed by Israel in September 2007 was a nuclear reactor under construction with North Korean assistance. The briefings featured a CIA-produced video that includes photographs taken from inside and around the facility at various times during its construction, as well as satellite images and digital renderings of certain elements of the reactor’s operations.

May 8, 2008: North Korea provides a U.S. delegation in Pyongyang with about 18,000 pages of documentation detailing the operations of two of its primary plutonium-related facilities at Yongbyon: a five megawatt nuclear reactor and a reprocessing facility. The records date back to 1986.

June 24, 2008: Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill tells reporters that North Korea’s upcoming nuclear declaration will consist of a “package of items” listing all nuclear materials and programs. The package will reportedly include a formal accounting of North Korea’s plutonium and plutonium-related nuclear facilities and side-documents regarding nuclear proliferation and uranium enrichment. Hill says the declaration will not include an accounting of nuclear weapons, which “are to be determined at a subsequent phase.”

June 26, 2008: Pyongyang delivers a declaration of its nuclear programs to China, the six-party talks chair. The declaration reportedly indicates that North Korea separated a total of about 30 kilograms of plutonium, and used about 2 kilograms for its 2006 nuclear test.

In return for North Korea’s declaration, President George W. Bush rescinds the application of the Trading with the Enemy Act toward Pyongyang, and notifies Congress of his intention to remove North Korea from the list of state sponsors of terrorism after 45 days, in accordance with U.S. law.

June 30, 2008: President George W. Bush signs into law the Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2008, which includes a provision allowing the president to waive sanctions on North Korea related to the 1994 Glenn Amendment imposed on Pyongyang following its 2006 nuclear test.

July 12, 2008: The participants in the six-party talks issue a statement outlining broadly the process for verifying North Korea’s nuclear programs. The six parties agree that experts from those countries will be involved in visits to nuclear facilities, the review of documents related to North Korea’s nuclear program, and the interview of technical personnel. The statement also establishes a timeline for completing the disablement of North Korea’s key nuclear facilities and the energy assistance being provided to Pyongyang in return, stating that both processes would be “fully implemented in parallel.”

Mid-July, 2008: The United States tables a draft verification protocol describing procedures used to verify all elements of North Korea’s nuclear programs, including uranium enrichment, weapons, and proliferation. The protocol includes provisions for access upon request for any declared or undeclared site and lists technical recording and detection measures inspectors could undertake. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill tells reporters July 22 that North Korea “indicated some problems” with the draft.

July 23, 2008: The foreign ministers of the six-party talks participants meet informally on the sidelines of an Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit.

Late July 2008: North Korea proposes a draft protocol to verify its nuclear activities. Diplomatic sources later tell Arms Control Today that this proposal is insufficient and it is not used as the basis for further verification negotiations.
August 2008: North Korean leader Kim Jong Il reportedly suffers a stroke, raising questions outside the country as to the status of the leadership in Pyongyang.

August 11, 2008: The 45-day period after which the president may remove North Korea from the State Department’s terrorism list expires. The president does not carry out the de-listing at this time. State Department spokesman Robert Wood tells reporters the next day that the 45-day period is a “minimum” rather than a deadline.

August 13, 2008: Japan and North Korea reach an agreement on procedures for addressing the abduction issue. Pyongyang commits to complete a reinvestigation into the fate of the abducted Japanese nationals by Fall 2008 and to provide Tokyo with access to locations, documents, and interviews in North Korea to conduct its own investigation. In return, Japan agrees to lift certain travel restrictions between the two countries and to discuss easing a ban on North Korea’s access to Japanese ports. The agreement is not implemented in the agreed timeframe.

August 22, 2008: Sung Kim, U.S. special envoy to the six-party talks, meets with North Korean officials in New York regarding revisions to the U.S. draft verification protocol.

August 26, 2008: KCNA carries a statement by a North Korean Foreign ministry official stating that the United States has not carried out its commitment to remove Pyongyang from the State Department’s terrorism list and that agreement on a verification protocol was not a condition of that commitment. In response, the statement indicates that Pyongyang will suspend the disablement of its key nuclear facilities at Yongbyon and consider taking steps to restore them “to their original state.”

September 17, 2008: Jane’s Defense Weekly reports that North Korea has nearly completed a new missile test site on its western coast near the village of Pongdong-ni. The site is believed to be more sophisticated than North Korea’s eastern missile launch site at Musudan-ri, with a capacity to carry out flights tests of larger missiles on a more frequent basis.

September 24, 2008: The IAEA issues a press statement indicating that, at Pyongyang’s request, the agency completed removing seals from North Korea’s reprocessing facility. The statement also said that North Korea informed the agency that it would begin introducing nuclear material at that facility “in one week’s time” and that inspectors would no longer have access to the plant.

October 1-3, 2008: Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill visits Pyongyang to discuss verification.

October 11, 2008: U.S. officials hold a State Department press briefing to announce a preliminary agreement with Pyongyang on measures to verify North Korea’s nuclear weapons programs. The agreement consists of a written joint document and verbal understandings which they say must be approved by the other four six-party talks participants. According to a State Department summary, the new agreement gives inspectors access to all 15 declared sites related to North Korea’s plutonium production program as well as undeclared sites “by mutual consent.” It also allows inspectors to carry out “scientific procedures” such as sampling.

In response to the verification agreement, the United States removes North Korea from the State Department’s terrorism list.

October 13, 2008: KCNA issues a North Korean Foreign Ministry statement indicating that, following its removal from the State Department’s terrorism list, Pyongyang will resume disabling its key nuclear facilities at the Yongbyon nuclear complex.

November 13, 2008: The North Korean Foreign Ministry issues a statement which denies that Pyongyang agreed to allow inspectors to carry out sampling at its nuclear facilities. The statement says that inspection activities are limited to “field visits, confirmation of documents, and interviews with technicians.” Pyongyang also says it is slowing, by half, the rate at which it removed spent fuel rods from its five-megawatt reactor in response to delays in receiving pledged energy aid.
Early December 2008: The United States completes the final shipment of its 200,000 tons of heavy fuel oil pledged to North Korea, bringing the total energy assistance to about 550,000 of 1 million tons.

December 8-11, 2008: Six-party discussions on verification, disablement, and energy assistance in Beijing end in stalemate due to a failure to reach agreement on verification. U.S. officials later claim that North Korea refused to agree in writing what it agreed verbally in October. The six parties issue a chairman’s statement in which they agree “to implement in parallel the disablement of the Yongbyon nuclear facilities and the provision of economic and energy assistance.”

December 12, 2008: State Department spokesperson Sean McCormack says that heavy fuel oil shipments to North Korea will not continue without a verification agreement, stating that “there is an understanding among the parties...that fuel oil shipments will not go forward absent progress.” China and Russia deny such an understanding and indicate that they intend to complete their share of the energy assistance.

2009

January 13, 2009: The North Korean Foreign Ministry issues a statement insisting that verification activities for nuclear disarmament should be carried out reciprocally between North and South Korea. It states that “free field access should be ensured to verify the introduction and deployment of U.S. nukes in South Korea and details about their withdrawal,” including verification procedures “on a regular basis” to prevent their reintroduction.

January 13-17, 2009: During a visit to Pyongyang, North Korean officials tell scholar Selig Harrison that the country’s declared stock of plutonium has “already been weaponized” and could not be inspected. Harrison relays North Korea’s claims in congressional testimony on February 12.

January 15-19, 2009: Hwang Joon-kook, South Korean deputy six-party talks negotiator, travels to North Korea to discuss Seoul’s potential purchase of about 14,000 fresh nuclear fuel rods previously produced at the Yongbyon complex. South Korean officials later indicate that Pyongyang demanded an exorbitant amount for the fuel and no deal was made.

February 3, 2009: Quoting unnamed South Korean officials, South Korea’s Yonhap newspaper reports that North Korea is preparing to test-launch its Taepo Dong 2 missile. Speculation about such a launch increases in the following days.

February 20, 2009: Secretary of State Hillary Clinton names Ambassador Stephen Bosworth to serve as U.S. special representative for North Korea policy.

February 24, 2009: KCNA states that “preparations for launching [an] experimental communications satellite...are now making brisk headway.” The United States, Japan, and South Korea later warn North Korea that its planned satellite launch would be in violation of a UN Security Council resolution 1718 and indicate that the council would consider the issue for further action, should North Korea go through with the launch.

March 11, 2009: North Korean authorities inform the International Maritime Organization and the International Civil Aviation Organization that they will launch a satellite launch vehicle between April 4-8. North Korea provides these agencies with information regarding expected “dangerous area coordinates” where two of the rocket’s three stages are expected to fall.

March 13, 2009: South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan tells reporters that South Korea may need to review the possibility of formally joining the Proliferation Security Initiative in response to the upcoming North Korean rocket launch.

April 5, 2009: North Korea launches the three-stage Unha-2 rocket, widely believed to be a modified version of its long range Taepo Dong-2 ballistic missile. Although North Korea claims the
rocket placed a satellite into orbit, U.S. Northern Command reports that the first stage landed in the Sea of Japan, and that the remaining stages, along with the payload fell into the Pacific Ocean.

April 13, 2009: The UN Security Council issues a presidential statement condemning North Korea’s April 5 rocket launch, and declaring it “in contravention of Security Council resolution 1718.” The statement also calls for strengthening the punitive measures under that resolution.

April 14, 2009: In response to UN Security Council statement, North Korea’s Foreign Ministry indicates that Pyongyang is withdrawing from the six-party talks and “will no longer be bound” by any of its agreements. North Korea also says that it will reverse steps taken to disable its nuclear facilities under six-party agreements in 2007 and will “fully reprocess” the 8,000 spent fuel rods from its Yongbyon reactor in order to extract plutonium for nuclear weapons.

April 16, 2009: North Korea ejects IAEA and U.S. monitors from the Yongbyon nuclear complex.

April 24, 2009: The UN Security Council places financial restrictions on three North Korean firms believed to be participating in proliferation: Korea Mining Development Trading Corp., Tanchon Commercial Bank, and Korea Ryongbong General Corp.

May 25, 2009: North Korea conducts its second underground nuclear test a few kilometers from its 2006 test site near the village of P’unggye. Following the test North Korea announces that “the results of the test helped satisfactorily settle the scientific and technological problems arising in furthering increasing the power of nuclear weapons and steadily developing nuclear technology.” Early yield estimates range from 2-8 kilotons, although the Russian Defense Ministry initially suggests a yield of 15-20 kilotons.

The UN Security Council convenes an emergency meeting and releases a presidential statement condemning the test as a violation of UN Security Council resolution 1718. The council also announces that it will meet to pass a new resolution dealing with the test.

May 26, 2009: South Korea officially announces that it will participate in the Proliferation Security Initiative.

May 27, 2009: KCNA carries a statement indicating that Pyongyang considers Seoul’s participation in PSI to be an act of war and that North Korea’s Korean People’s Army will no longer be bound by the 1953 Armistice Agreement which brought an end to hostilities during the Korean War.

June 12, 2009: In response to North Korea’s May 25 nuclear test, the UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1874, which expands sanctions against Pyongyang. The resolution intensified inspection regime to prevent proliferation to and from North Korea, calls for enhanced financial restrictions against North Korea and North Korean firms, a nearly comprehensive arms embargo on the country, and strengthened council oversight over the implementation of the resolution. It also bars North Korea from carrying out any further missile tests.

June 13, 2009: The North Korean Foreign ministry issues a statement outlining “countermeasures” Pyongyang would take in response to UNSC Resolution 1874. The measures included weaponizing all newly separated plutonium from the spent fuel from its Yongbyon nuclear reactor, continuing to develop a uranium enrichment capability, and responding militarily to any blockade.

July 16, 2009: The UN Security Council places 10 North Korean entities linked to the countries missile and nuclear program on the list of sanctioned organizations and people.

August 4, 2009: Former President Bill Clinton visits North Korea in order to secure the release of two U.S. journalists who were accused of spying, meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Il.

August 5, 2009: The state-run Korean Central News Agency issues a statement saying that former President Bill Clinton’s August 4 visit, to secure the release of two U.S. journalists, will help build “bilateral confidence.”
August 10, 2009: Indian police tell reporters that they detained and inspected the North Korean ship MV *Mu San* but did not discover any radioactive materials.

August 12, 2009: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appoints an eight-person panel of experts to the UN Security Council’s 1718 committee to assess the implementation of the sanctions on North Korea in accordance with Resolution 1874.

September 11, 2009: State Department spokesman P. J. Crowley tells reporters that the United States is “prepared to enter into a bilateral discussion with North Korea” as a precursor to resuming the six-party talks.

October 5, 2009: Xinhua News Agency reports that Kim Jong-Il informed Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao that Pyongyang was ready to return to multilateral talks provided bilateral talks with the United States yielded a favorable result.

October 20, 2009: Ian Kelly, State Department spokesman, tells reporters that North Korea issued a standing invitation for Stephen Bosworth, U.S. special representative for North Korea policy, to visit Pyongyang.

November 3, 2009: KCNA reports that North Korea has reprocessed the last 8,000 fuel rods from the Yongbyon reactor.

November 9, 2009: P. J. Crowley, State Department spokesman, tells reporters that Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth will lead a group to Pyongyang for direct talks with the North Korean government.

November 19, 2009: At a joint press conference with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, President Obama says that the United States and South Korea are committed to pursuing “concrete” action on Pyongyang’s part to roll back its nuclear program.

December 8-10, 2009: Officials for the Obama administration hold their first senior-level meetings with the North Korean government in Pyongyang. U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth leads to delegation to Pyongyang, where he delivers a letter from President Obama to Kim Jong-Il.

December 12, 2009: Authorities in Thailand, acting on a tip from the United States, seize 35 tons of weapons from a North Korean plane that made an unscheduled landing in Bangkok. According to the Thai government, the plane was heading to the Middle East.

2010

January 11, 2010: The North Korean Foreign Ministry issues a statement suggesting talks begin on replacing the 1953 ceasefire with a peace treaty.

January 24, 2010: Pyongyang threatens war with South Korea in response to Seoul’s statement that it would invade North Korea if there was the threat of a nuclear strike.

February 9, 2010: Xinhua News Agency reports that Kim Jong Il informed Chinese authorities that Pyongyang is still committed to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

February 12, 2010: UN Undersecretary-General for Political Affairs B. Lyn Pascoe tells reporters that North Korea “are not eager” to resume the six-party talks.

March 26, 2010: The South Korean patrol ship *Cheonan* is sunk near the South Korean-North Korean maritime border.
April 14, 2010: Kurt Campbell, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, tells reporters that the United States supports South Korea’s decision to stop engagement with North Korea until after the Cheonan sinking incident is resolved.

April 19, 2010: Yu Myung-hwan, South Korea’s Foreign Minister, says that talks with North Korea will not occur “for some time” if his government uncovers evidence that North Korea was involved in the Cheonan’s sinking.

April 21, 2010: North Korean state media reports that Pyongyang issued a memorandum stating that the country will be party to nonproliferation and disarmament agreements “on an equal footing with other nuclear weapons states.”

April 25, 2010: During a press conference, South Korean Defense Minister Kim Tae-young says that one of the most likely causes of the Cheonan’s sinking is a torpedo. North Korea denies any involvement in the incident.

May 20, 2010: The multinational Joint Civilian-Military Investigation Group (JIG) releases its findings regarding the March 26 sinking of the ROKS Cheonan. The JIG concludes that North Korea was responsible for firing the torpedo that sank the South Korean ship.

May 20, 2010: South Korea makes a formal accusation against North Korea for sinking the South Korean ship the Cheonan with a torpedo attack.

May 20, 2010: North Korea denies involvement in the Cheonan sinking, and issues a statement saying that any punishment will be met with “various forms of tough measures.”

May 24, 2010: South Korean President Lee Myung-bak says that South Korea will sever almost all trade with Pyongyang in response to North Korea’s sinking of the ROKS Cheonan.

May 25, 2010: North Korea says that it will cut all links to South Korea in response to Seoul’s accusation that Pyongyang was responsible for sinking the ship Cheonan.

July 21, 2010: The United States imposes new sanctions against Pyongyang for its involvement in the sinking of the South Korean ship the Cheonan.

July 25, 2010: The United States and South Korea begin a four-day joint military exercise in the Sea of Japan as a show of force in response to the Cheonan incident.

August 25, 2010: Former President Jimmy Carter arrives in Pyongyang on a goodwill mission to bring home U.S. citizen Aijalon Mahli Gomes, who was arrested after entering North Korea from China.

August 30, 2010: President Obama signs an executive order that increases financial restrictions against North Korea. The Department of Treasury also announces that it has sanctioned eight North Korean entities for involvement in Pyongyang’s nuclear and missile programs.

September 15, 2010: In an op-ed published in the New York Times, former President Jimmy Carter writes that during his August visit he received “clear, strong signals” that North Korea wants to restart negotiations.

September 15, 2010: Stephen Bosworth, U.S. special representative for North Korea policy, tells reporters that it will be a slow road to resuming six-party talks with North Korea and the talks will only occur after “specific and concrete” actions by Pyongyang.

September 28, 2010: The ruling Korean Workers’ Party (KWP) convened its third Conference in Pyongyang, the first such gathering in 44 years. The conference entailed a number of leadership changes, including the appointment of Kim Jong Il’s third son, Kim Jong Eun, as a Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission.
November 12, 2010: North Korea reveals that it has constructed a 2,000-centrifuge uranium enrichment facility to a visiting team of North Korea specialists, including former Los Alamos National Laboratory Director Siegfried Hecker. North Korean officials claim that the facility will produce LEU for an LWR which North Korea also reveals is under construction. Pyongyang also admits for the first time that it can produce uranium hexafluoride (UF6), the feedstock for uranium enrichment, confirming long-held suspicions about the presence of such a capability. The construction of the LWR is slated for 2012, the 100-year anniversary of the birth of Kim Il Sung, but in a Nov. 20 trip report, Hecker expresses doubts about that timeline. The enrichment plant is housed in the former fuel fabrication building for the graphite-moderated reactors at Yongbyon, and the LWR is being constructed at the former site of the 5 megawatt reactor's cooling tower.

November 23, 2010: North Korea fires artillery rounds at the South Korean island of Yeonpyeong, 200 of which hit the island killing two soldiers and injuring seventeen others. Three civilians were also hurt in the attack. South Korea returned fire and scrambled combat aircraft in the area.

November 29, 2010: In response to the Yeonpyeong shelling, China calls for an emergency session of the six-party talks to “exchange views on major issues of concern”.

December 6, 2010: The United States, Japan, and South Korea reject China's call for an emergency session of six-party talks, maintaining that North-South relations must improve before multilateral discussions can continue.

2011

February 16, 2011: In Senate testimony, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper says that North Korea likely has additional undeclared uranium enrichment facilities beyond the facility first revealed in November of 2010.

February 28, 2011: U.S. and South Korean forces conduct large-scale joint military exercises. North Korea threatens to turn Seoul into a “sea of fire” in response to the exercises, which U.S. officials claim was planned long in advance of the recent peak in tensions.

March 15, 2011: North Korea tells a visiting Russian official that it is willing to return to six-party talks and to talk about its uranium-enrichment activities.

March 17, 2011: South Korea rejects the latest North Korean offer, calling for actions to show the sincerity of North Korea’s commitment to denuclearization before multilateral talks can begin again.

April 18, 2011: China proposes three-step revitalization of multilateral talks, beginning with bilateral talks between North and South Korea, followed by similar talks between the United States and North Korea, and, finally, a resumption of the six-party discussions.

April 18, 2011: U.S. President Barack Obama issues an executive order reaffirming a ban on the import of goods, services, and technologies from North Korea.

April 26, 2011: Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter visits Pyongyang, accompanied by three other former heads of state, in a bid to revitalize negotiations.

May 9, 2011: South Korean President Lee Myung-bak introduces the possibility of inviting North Korea to the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, on the condition that the North commits to giving up nuclear weapons. A North Korean spokesperson rejected the precondition, stating that denuclearization was an attempt by the South to open the way for an invasion.

June 13, 2011: U.S. warship forces a North Korean freight vessel to turn back off the coast of China. The vessel was believed to be carrying a shipment of missile components to Burma. The North Korean ship refused to be inspected, but voluntarily reversed course after being shadowed by the U.S. destroyer.
July 22, 2011: Wi Sung-lac, the South Korean envoy to the six-party talks, met with his North Korean counterpart, Ri Yong Ho, on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations meeting in Bali as part of efforts to restart dialog regarding North Korea’s nuclear weapons program.

July 24, 2011: The foreign ministers of Japan, South Korea, and the United States issue a statement welcoming the discussion that took place during the North-South meeting and saying that it “should be a sustained process going forward.”

July 28-29, 2011: U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth and North Korean First Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye Gwan meet in New York, as part of efforts to revive multilateral talks on North Korea’s nuclear program. This marked the first high-level meeting between the United States and North Korea in nearly two years, and the United States reportedly reiterated its willingness to restart negotiations if North Korea displayed committed itself to being a constructive partner in the negotiation process.

August 1, 2011: A North Korean Foreign Ministry statement carried by the state-run Korean Central News Agency expresses Pyonyang’s interest in resuming multilateral talks with the United States “at an early date.”

August 24, 2011: After a meeting between Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, Pyongyang says that it would be willing to observe a moratorium on the production and testing of nuclear weapons and missiles in the context of resumed talks.

September 24, 2011: During a diplomatic trip to China, North Korea Prime Minister Choe Yong Rim reiterates the position Kim Jong Il expressed to Russia a month earlier, telling China’s top officials that Pyongyang remained willing to consider a moratorium on nuclear testing in the context of the 6 party talks.

October 24-25, 2011: The United States and North Korea hold a round of talks in Geneva on steps to resume the six-party process. Ambassador Glyn Davies takes over for Ambassador Stephen Bosworth as the U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy.

December 17, 2011: After holding power for 17 years, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il dies. He is succeeded by his youngest son, Kim Jong Un, who is believed to be about 28 years old.

December 29, 2011: Kim Jong Un is formally declared North Korea’s new leader.

2012

February 29, 2012: Following a Feb. 23-24 meeting between the United States and North Korea in Beijing, the two countries announce in separate statements an agreement by North Korea to suspend operations at its Yongbyon uranium enrichment plant, invite IAEA inspectors to monitor the suspension, and implement moratoriums on nuclear and long-range missile tests. The United States says that it would provide North Korea 240,000 metric tons of food aid under strict monitoring.

March 16, 2012: North Korea announces it will launch a satellite in mid-April to celebrate the centennial birthdate of the country’s founder Kim Il Sung. The United States says that the launch would violate a Feb. 29 agreement in which North Korea pledged not to launch any long-range missiles and would undermine Pyonyang’s credibility regarding the monitoring of food aid and other commitments.

March 29, 2012: Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Affairs Peter Lavoy tells the House Armed Services Committee that the United States has suspended arrangements to deliver food aid to North Korea under a Feb. 29 agreement due to the North’s announced satellite launch.

April 13, 2012: North Korea attempts to launch a weather satellite using the Unha-3, a three-stage liquid-fueled rocket, from its Sohae Satellite Launching Station in the southwest corner of the
country. During the first stage, after approximately 90 seconds, the rocket falls apart after veering slightly east from its intended course. The first stage appeared to be comprised of a cluster of four Nodong medium-range ballistic missiles engines. The second stage, which appeared to be based on a BM-25 Musudan intermediate-range ballistic missile did not ignite. It is unclear what caused the rocket launch to fail. Analysts speculate that there may have been a structural failure in the second stage, or that not all four of the engines in the first stage fired correctly. North Korea admits that the launch is a failure, which it did not do after the April 2009 launch, when the North Korean public was told that the satellite successfully entered orbit. The US officially halts its plans to send food aid to North Korea.

April 15, 2012: In a parade honoring the 100th birthday of North Korea founder Kim Il-Sung, North Korea reveals six road-mobile ICBMs in a military parade, the KN-08, although most experts conclude that the missiles are mock-ups based on imagery analysis that reveals significant abnormalities in the design features.

April 16, 2012: The United Nations Security Council condemns North Korea's satellite launch because of applicability to ballistic missile development, declaring that it acted in violation of Security Council Resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009), and calls upon North Korea to comply with the provisions under the resolutions or face a tightening of sanctions.

April 19, 2012: Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta tells the House Armed Services Committee that North Korea is getting "some help" from China on its missile development, but says that he does not know the extent of the assistance provided.

December 1, 2012: North Korea announces it will attempt another satellite launch using a long-range rocket between the dates of December 10-22. The rocket, also called the Unha-3, will be launched from the Sohae Satellite Launching Station and follow the same trajectory as the April 13, 2012 launch. In response, the United States Department of State issues a statement saying that it would view a satellite launch as a "highly provocative act" that would threaten the peace and security of the region.

December 9, 2012: North Korea detects a deficiency in the first stage of the rocket, after it has been assembled at Sohae, and announces an extension of the launch window through December 29.

December 12, 2012: North Korea launches the Unha-3. Shortly after the launch the North Korean Central News Agency reports that the launch was a success and the satellite entered orbit. Japanese and South Korean officials confirm the launch and report that debris splashed down in the areas that North Korea indicated for the first and second stages. The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) also confirms the launch and says that an object appears to have achieved orbit.

2013

January 22, 2013: The United Nations Security Council passes Resolution 2087 in response to North Korea's Dec. 12 satellite launch, which used technology applicable to ballistic missiles in violation of resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009). Resolution 2087 strengthens and expands existing sanctions put in place by the earlier resolutions and freezes the assets of additional North Korean individuals and people.


February 12, 2013: The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) detects seismic activity near North Korea's nuclear test site. CTBTO Executive Secretary Tibor Toth says that the activity has "explosion-like characteristics" and confirms that the activity comes from the area of the 2006 and 2009 nuclear tests. The South Korean Defense Ministry estimated the yield at 6-7 kilotons in the immediate aftermath and called for a UN Security Council Meeting.

March 7, 2013: The United Nations Security Council unanimously passes Resolution 2094 in
response to North Korea's nuclear test on February 12, 2013. Resolution 2094 strengthens existing sanctions by expanding the scope of materials covered and adds additional financial sanctions, including blocking bulk cash transfers. Additional individuals and entities also are identified for asset freezes.

April 23, 2013: The CTBTO announces that its international monitoring system detected radioactive gases at stations in Japan and Russia. The CTBTO concludes that the gases were likely released during an event approximately 50 days prior to the April 9 detection, which coincides with North Korea's February 13 nuclear test.

April 2013: North Korea announces it plans to restart its heavy water reactor at Yongbyon.

July 15, 2013: A North Korean ship stopped in Panama is found to be carrying weapons from Cuba. The shipment included small arms, light weapons, rocket-propelled grenades, artillery ammunition, and MiG aircraft in violation of UN Security Council resolutions that prohibit North Korea from importing and exporting weaponry.

August 2013: Satellite imagery indicates that North Korea likely restarted a nuclear reactor at its Yongbyon site. The heavy water reactor in question produced the spent fuel from which North Korea separated weapons-usable plutonium for its nuclear arsenal. The reactor was shut down in 2007.

September 20, 2013: The IAEA General Conference adopts a resolution calling on North Korea to come into full compliance with the NPT and cooperate in the full implementation of the IAEA safeguards.

2014

March 8, 2014: China declares a "red line" on North Korea, saying it will not permit war or chaos on the Korean peninsula and that the only path to peace can only come through denuclearization.

March 21, 2014: North Korea test-fires 30 short-range rockets off its east coast, the latest in series of military actions condemned by South Korea.

March 26, 2014: North Korea test-fires two medium-range Rodang (also known as No Dong) missiles into the Sea of Japan, violating UN sanctions. This is the first time in five years that North Korea has tested medium-range projectiles.

March 27, 2014: UN Security Council unanimously condemns North Korea for launching the midrange missiles, saying the launch violates council resolutions; China joins the council in criticizing the launch.

March 30, 2014: North Korea threatens to carry out a 'new form' of nuclear test, one year after its third nuclear test raised military tensions on the Korean Peninsula and prompted the UN to tighten sanctions. Pyongyang does not specify what it means by a 'new form,' but some speculate that it plans to make nuclear devices small enough to fit on ballistic missiles.

March 31, 2014: North Korea and South Korea fire hundreds of artillery shells across the disputed Western Sea border. While the shells fall harmlessly into the water, it is the most serious confrontation since an artillery duel in 2010.

April 4, 2014: South Korea conducts its own missile test amid rising military threats from North Korea, successfully launching a newly developed ballistic missile capable of striking most of the North.

May 2, 2014: New commercial satellite imagery shows that North Korea is expanding its main rocket-launching site and testing engines of what is believed to be its first road-mobile intercontinental ballistic missile, according to the U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University.
**June 27, 2014:** North Korea fires three short-range projectiles off its east coast, days after it warned of retaliation against the release of American comedy film The Interview, which involves a plot to kill Kim Jong-un.

**August 22, 2014:** Satellite images indicate that North Korea is likely to have the ability to launch a longer-range rocket that can carry a heavier payload by the end of this year.

**September 6, 2014:** South Korean military says North Korea launched three short-range projectiles off its east coast.

**October 2014:** Analysis from the U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins indicates that North Korea has a submarine at the Sinpo South Shipyard that may be a test bed for submarine-launched ballistic missiles. A test-stand, likely for exploring the possibilities of launching ballistic missiles from submarines or ships is also identified at the shipyard.

**October 25, 2014:** General Curtis Scaparrotti, commander of US forces in South Korea, says he believes that North Korea can fit a nuclear weapon on a ballistic missile, a process known as miniaturization.

**November 20 2014:** North Korea threatens to conduct a fourth nuclear test after the UN Human Rights Committee refers North Korea to the International Criminal Court for human rights abuses on November 19.

**November 20, 2014:** Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov announces that a North Korean special envoy told Russian President Vladimir Putin that North Korea is ready to resume the Six-Party Talks.

**2015**

**January 2, 2015:** The United States expands sanctions on North Korean entities and individuals, some of which are involved with North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

**January 10, 2015:** North Korea announces it offered to suspend nuclear testing in exchange for the United States and South Korea calling off annual joint-military exercises slated for spring 2015. The United States rejects the offer.

**February 7, 2015:** North Korea claims to test a new anti-ship missile. Kim Jong Un reportedly oversees the test.

**February 8, 2015:** North Korea tests five short-range ballistic missiles from Wonsan. The missiles fly approximately 125 miles northeast into the ocean.

**April 7, 2015:** Adm William Gortney, head of U.S. North Command, tells reporters that North Korea's ICBM, the KN-08 is operational, despite never having been tested. Experts dispute the assessment.

**May 9, 2015:** North Korea successfully launches a ballistic missile, which it claims came from a submarine, that traveled about 150 meters. Experts believe the missile was launched from a submerged barge.

**November 28, 2015:** North Korea tests a ballistic missile from a submarine. The missile test fails.

**December 8, 2015:** The U.S. Treasury Department announces additional designations under Executive Orders 13551 and 13382. This includes the State Department designating North Korea's Strategic Rocket Force under 13382 for engaging in activities that contribute to delivery vehicles capable of carrying WMDs. Several banks involved with proliferation financing were also named as were three shipping companies.
December 21, 2015: North Korea tests another ballistic missile from a submarine. This test is reported as a success.

2016

January 6, 2016: North Korea announces it conducted a fourth nuclear weapons test, claiming to have detonated a hydrogen bomb for the first time. Monitoring stations from the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization detect the seismic activity from the test. The type of device tested remains unclear, although experts doubt it was of a hydrogen bomb based on seismic evidence.

February 7, 2016: North Korea launches a long-range ballistic missile carrying what it has said is an earth observation satellite in defiance of United Nations sanctions barring it from using ballistic missile technology, drawing strong international condemnation from other governments which believe it will advance North Korea's military ballistic missile capabilities.

March 2, 2016: The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2270 condemning the nuclear test and launch of early 2016, and demanding that North Korea not conduct further tests and immediately suspend all activities related to its ballistic missile program. Resolution 2270 expands existing sanctions on North Korea by adding to the list of sanctioned individuals and entities, introducing new financial sanctions, and banning states from supplying aviation fuel and other specified minerals to North Korea. Resolution 2270 also introduces a requirement that UN member states inspect all cargo in transit to or from North Korea for illicit goods and arms.

April 15, 2016: North Korea test launches an intermediate-range ballistic missile, the Mususdan, which was not known to have been flight-tested prior to the April 15 launch. The missile test is a failure. The UN Security Council issues a statement condemning the launch as a "clear violation" of existing Security Council resolutions.

April 23, 2016: North Korea tests a KN-11 submarine launch ballistic missile. The missile flew approximately 30 kilometers before exploding, according to South Korean officials.

April 24, 2016: The UN Security Council condemns North Korea's submarine-launched ballistic missile test.

April 28, 2016: North Korea tests two intermediate-range Musudan missiles. The tests are reported as a failure.

May 6-9, 2016: North Korea holds its seventh Congress for its ruling Korean Workers' Party. During the Congress, Kim Jong Un describes North Korea's nuclear policy, saying North Korea "will not use a nuclear weapon unless its sovereignty is encroached upon by any aggressive hostile forces with nukes, as it had already declared."

May 30, 2016: North Korea tests another intermediate-range Musudan missile.

May 31, 2016: Satellite imagery analysis from 38 North assess that North Korea is "preparing to commence or has already begun" reprocessing nuclear material to separate additional plutonium for weapons use.

June 21, 2016: North Korea conducts two additional intermediate-range Musudan ballistic missile tests, bringing the total number of Musudan tests to six since April. One of the tests is a partial success, as the missile flew an estimated 400 kilometers. The other explodes in midflight after approximately 150 kilometers.
June 22, 2016: The UN Security Council holds an emergency session to consider North Korea's missile tests.

June 23, 2016: The Security Council releases a statement strongly condemning North Korea's recent ballistic missile launches and calls on member states to fully implement UN Security Council measures imposed by council resolutions.

July 6, 2016: North Korea signals a willingness to resume negotiations on denuclearization and defines denuclearization in a statement by a government spokesperson.

July 6, 2016: The US Department of Treasury announces designations on top North Korean officials, including the leader, Kim Jong Un, over ties to human rights abuses in North Korea.

July 8, 2016: South Korea and the United States announce a decision to deploy the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense battery (THAAD), to South Korea. The missile defense system is "a defensive measure to ensure the security" of South Korea. THAAD is designed to intercept short and medium-range ballistic missiles.

August 3, 2016: North Korea fires a medium-range ballistic missile, the Nodong. The missile splashes down in Japan's economic exclusion zone, about 200 kilometers off of Japan's coast.

August 24, 2016: North Korea tests an SLBM, the KN-11. The missile ejects from a submarine and flies approximately 500 kilometers on a lofted trajectory before splashing down in the ocean. The test appears to be a success.

September 5, 2016: North Korea tests three medium-range ballistic missiles simultaneously. The missiles travel about 1,000 kilometers.

September 9, 2016: North Korea conducts a fifth nuclear test. The seismic activity registers a magnitude of 5.0.

October 14, 2016: North Korea conducts a failed test of what is believed to be the intermediate-range Musudan ballistic missile. The missile explodes soon after lift-off.

October 19, 2016: North Korea conducts a failed test of what is believed to be the intermediate-range Musudan ballistic missile. The missile explodes shortly after lift-off. This is the eighth test of the Musudan in 2016. Only the June launch was a success.

October 25, 2016: U.S. Director of National Intelligence James Clapper says that "the notion of getting the North Koreans to denuclearize is probably a lost cause" and that nuclear weapons are North Korea's "ticket to survival."

2017

February 12, 2017: North Korea tests a new ballistic missile, the Pukguksong-2. North Korean media calls the test a success. The missile flew about 500 kilometers at a lofted trajectory. Imagery suggests that the Pukguksong-2 is a solid-fueled, medium-range system based on a submarine-launched ballistic missile that North Korea has been testing for several years. The test utilized ‘cold-launch’ technology, meaning that the missile was ejected from its canister using compressed gas. The transport erector launcher used for the missile test was also domestically manufactured in North Korea.

February 13, 2017: Kim Jong Nam, the older half-brother of Kim Jong Un, is killed in an airport in Malaysia. Tests reveal that he died from exposure to VX, a nerve agent. VX is banned under the Chemical Weapons Convention, but North Korea has not signed or ratified that treaty. North Korea denies responsibility for the assassination.
March 6, 2017: North Korea launches four ballistic missiles from a region near North Korea's border with China. The missiles fly about 1,000 kilometers and land in Japanese economic exclusion zone, about 300 kilometers off the coast Japan.

April 5, 2017: North Korea tests a ballistic missile. The missile explodes shortly after the launch.

April 6, 2017: U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping meet and agree to cooperate more closely on achieving denuclearization of North Korea.

April 15, 2017: North Korea celebrates the birth of its founder, Kim Il Sung, with a parade that displays several new ballistic missiles, including a new variant of the KN-08 and two canister systems. It is unclear if the canisters hold new ICBMs.

April 16, 2017: North Korea tests a ballistic missile. The missile explodes shortly after the launch.

April 17, 2017: Acting Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia, Susan Thornton, tells reporters about the U.S. policy toward North Korea, which officials describe as "maximum pressure and engagement." Thornton said that Washington is looking for a "tangible signal" from North Korea about its seriousness in engaging in talks and there is not a "specific precondition."

April 26, 2017: The Trump Administration briefs Congress on its North Korea policy and releases a statement that calls for increasing sanctions pressure on North Korea and working with allies and regional partners on diplomacy.

April 27, 2017: Secretary of State Rex Tillerson says in an interview with NPR that the United States is open to direct talks with North Korea on the "right agenda." He says that denuclearization is still the goal for any agreement.

April 28, 2017: Secretary of State Rex Tillerson chairs a special meeting of the UN Security Council. In opening remarks, he says that North Korea must take "concrete steps to reduce the threat that its illegal weapons programs pose" before talks can begin.

May 2, 2017: The THAAD missile defense system becomes operational in South Korea.

May 9, 2017: Moon Jae-in is elected president of South Korea. Moon supports engagement with North Korea, but says talks cannot occur while Pyongyang continues to conduct nuclear and missile tests.

May 14, 2017: North Korea tests the Hwasong-12 missile. The missile test is successful with a range of 4,800 kilometers on a standard trajectory, making it an intermediate-range ballistic missile.

June 1, 2017: The United States imposes sanctions on individuals and entities linked to North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

June 29-30, 2017: South Korean President Moon Jae-in meets with U.S. President Donald Trump at a summit in Washington, DC. The leaders pledge to continue working together on North Korea.

July 3, 2017: North Korea tests its Hwasong-14 ballistic missile. Initial analysis of the test indicates that the range would have been about 6,700 kilometers at a standard trajectory, making it an ICBM.

July 28, 2017: Japan, South Korea, and the United States report that North Korea tested an ICBM. Initial analysis of the test indicates a range of about 10,400km, not taking into account the rotation of the Earth, putting Los Angeles, Denver and Chicago within range. Russia claimed the missile was a medium-range ballistic missile.

August 5, 2017: The UN Security Council unanimously passes Resolution 2371, which imposes additional sanctions, including a complete ban on the export of coal, iron, seafood and lead, on North Korea in response to the July ICBM tests. See UN Security Council Resolutions on North Korea for more information.
August 8, 2017: A leaked Defense Intelligence Agency report found that North Korea has produced miniaturized nuclear warheads for ballistic missile delivery, including for ICBMs.

On the same day, in response to North Korean criticism of the United States, President Trump told reporters that "North Korea best not make any more threats to the United States.... They will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen."

August 9, 2017: In response to Trump's remarks, North Korean made a statement detailing a plan to test four Hwasong-12 intermediate-range ballistic missiles, which would fly over Japan and land in the waters 30-40km from the coast of Guam.

August 10, 2017: Trump told reporters that his previous threat of "fire and fury" should North Korea continue to threaten the United States may not have been "tough enough".

August 11, 2017: Trump tweeted: "military solutions are now fully in place, locked and loaded, should North Korea act unwisely. Hopefully Kim Jong Un will find another path!"

August 14, 2017: Kim Jong Un declares that after receiving Guam strike plans, he will wait to see what Washington's next move is before making a decision.

August 25, 2017: North Korea tests three short-range ballistic missiles to the northeast, two of which flew about 155 miles, and one of which blew up immediately.

August 28, 2017: North Korea tests its Hwasong-12 missile, which flew over 2,700km and overflew Japan. In a statement the next day, President Trump claims "all options are on the table."

September 2, 2017: North Korea official state media releases photos of Kim Jong Un with what it claims is a thermonuclear weapon small enough to fit on an ICBM that could reach the continental United States.

September 3, 2017: North Korea conducts its sixth nuclear test, claiming the device tested was a hydrogen bomb and the test was a "perfect success." Seismic activity indicates that North Korea did conduct its largest nuclear test to date at 3:30 UTC. The initial estimate from the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) is that the seismic event's magnitude was around 5.8, occurred at a very shallow depth, and took place in the immediate vicinity of North Korea’s Pyunggye-ri test site. Based on the seismic data, a number of experts assess the device had an explosive yield in excess of 100 kilotons TNT equivalent, which is significantly higher than North Korea's past nuclear tests. The CTBTO’s seismic estimate was later revised to 6.1 on September 7.

September 4, 2017: In remarks at an emergency UN Security Council briefing called in the wake of North Korea's sixth nuclear test, US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley states “being a nuclear power is not about using those terrible weapons to threaten others. Nuclear powers understand their responsibilities.”

UNSCR 2375

September 15, 2017: North Korea conducts a ballistic missile test. The test appears to be an intermediate-range Hwasong-12. The missile over flew Japan on a standard trajectory and reportedly traveled about 3,700 kilometers.

September 19, 2017: In his first address to the UN General Assembly, President Trump threatens to “totally destroy North Korea,” if the United States is forced to defend itself or its allies, adding “Rocket Man is on a suicide mission for himself and for his regime.”

September 21, 2017: President Trump issues an executive order imposing additional sanctions on entities that facilitate financial transactions and trade with North Korea.
September 21, 2017: Kim Jong Un responds to Trump’s UN speech with an unprecedented statement under his own name, calling Trump’s behavior “mentally deranged” and asserting that “a frightened dog barks louder.” Kim Jong Un further stated that Trump’s words “convinced me, rather than frightening or stopping me, that the path I chose is the correct and that one I have to follow to the last.” He threatened, “exercising...a corresponding, highest level of hardline countermeasure in history” and declared he would make Trump “pay dearly for his speech.”

North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho explains that the “highest level” action Kim Jong Un referred to in his statement could be a hydrogen bomb test in or over the Pacific Ocean, although he claimed he had “no idea what actions could be taken as it will be ordered by leader Kim Jong Un. Ri also says that Trump’s comments make “our rocket’s visit to the U.S. mainland inevitable all the more.”

September 23, 2017: U.S. B1-B strategic bombers fly near North Korea’s coast, the farthest north they have flown in the 21st century.

Trump tweets that North Korea “wouldn’t be around much longer” if he echoes “Little Rocket Man.”

September 25, 2017: At a press conference in New York, North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho claims that Trump’s comments at the UN General Assembly and on Twitter constituted a declaration of war and that North Korea therefore has a right to shoot down U.S. strategic bombers.


November 6, 2017: U.S. President Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Abe meet during Trump's visit to Japan. According to a White House press release, the two leaders vowed to boost trilateral cooperation with South Korea to address the North Korean nuclear threat and Trump “underscored the commitment" of the United States to provide Japan with defensive equipment, including ballistic missile defenses.

November 7, 2017: President Trump delivers an address to the South Korean National Assembly, the first address by a U.S. President since President Clinton's in 1993. In his speech, Trump addresses Kim Jong Un directly, warning him not to underestimate the United States. Trump also states that in order to begin talks, Pyongyang would need to first take steps towards denuclearization.

November 8, 2017: U.S. President Trump meets with South Korean President Moon Jae-In. In a joint statement released after the summit, the two leaders emphasize that they will work together to counter the threat posed by North Korea and call on China to use its leverage to achieve a diplomatic solution.

November 20, 2017: President Trump officially designates North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism. North Korea had been previously designated as a state sponsor of terrorism but was removed from the list in 2008.

November 29, 2017: North Korea launches an intercontinental ballistic missile from Pyongsong at 3:17 am local time, which flew for about 53 minutes, traveling 1000km on a lofted trajectory and landing in the Sea of Japan. The U.S. State Department releases a statement condemning the test but declaring that "diplomatic options remain open and viable, for now."

December 22, 2017: The UN Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2397, imposing additional sanctions on North Korea, including cutting refined petroleum imports by nearly 90 percent, limiting crude oil exports to 4 million barrels and mandating the expulsion of North Korean workers from other countries in two years or less.

2018
January 1, 2018: Kim Jong Un announces in his annual New Years address that North Korea's nuclear forces are "capable of thwarting and countering any nuclear threats from the United States" and says North Korea will mass produce nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles for deployment. Kim offers to send a delegation to South Korea for the upcoming Olympics and calls for talks with Seoul to discuss the prospects of North Korea's participation.

January 2, 2018: South Korea says it is willing to meet with North Korea and proposes talks at Panmunjom. To discuss the possibility of talks, North Korea reestabishes a hotline between the two states that it had disconnected nearly two years ago after the Kaesong industrial complex was shut down.

January 4, 2018: President Trump and President Moon Jae-in agree to postpone the annual "Foal Eagle" U.S.-South Korean joint military exercises until after the Winter Olympics in South Korea in an effort to "de-conflict" the Games and "focus on ensuring the security" of the event.

January 9, 2018: Representatives from North and South Korea meet at Panmunjom in the demilitarized zone for the first inter-Korean talks since 2015. The two sides agree to reopen a military-to-military hotline that had been closed since February 2016 and North Korea announces it will send a delegation to the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea, although it makes a "strong complaint" after South Korean representatives propose talks on denuclearization.

January 16, 2018: Canada and the United States co-host a summit in Vancouver with foreign ministers from 20 countries that supported South Korea under the UN flag in the Korean War to discuss North Korea. Implementation and enforcement of existing UN sanctions on North Korea is a key focus of the meeting. U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson calls on Russian and China, neither of which was invited to attend, to better implement sanctions and emphasizes the importance of interdiction of illicit cargo. Tillerson reiterates the U.S. rejection of the Russian-Chinese "freeze-for-freeze" proposal and the position that North Korea must demonstrate a commitment to denuclearization before talks can begin.

February 8, 2018: North Korea holds a military parade where it displays a new solid-fuel short-range ballistic missile. Among other missiles, the parade also shows off two different intercontinental ballistic missile designs, the Hwasong-14 and the Hwasong-15, both of which were tested in 2017.

February 10, 2018: Kim Yo Jong, Kim Jong Un's sister, meets with South Korean President Moon Jae-in in the Presidential Blue House in Seoul, and invites Moon Jae-in to visit Pyongyang for a summit meeting. Kim Yo Jong attended the Winter Olympics from February 9-11, once sitting a row behind U.S. Vice President Mike Pence. A scheduled meeting between Pence and Kim Yo Jong was reportedly cancelled when Kim Yo Jong pulled out at the last minute, citing new U.S. sanctions and Pence's meeting with North Korean defectors.

March 5, 2018: Two top aides of South Korean President Moon Jae-in meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Chung Eui-yong, Moon's national security advisor, and Suh Hoon, South Korean director of the National Intelligence Service, are the first South Korean envoys sent to North Korea in 11 years.

March 6, 2018: South Korean officials report that North Korea "expressed its willingness to begin earnest negotiations with the U.S. to discuss denuclearization issues," as long as its security is guaranteed as part of a five-point agreement that Kim Jong Un and two South Korean envoys reached during their visit to North Korea. The two countries reportedly also agree on a North-South Korean summit at the end of April, establishing a hotline between President Moon and Kim, that North Korea would not conduct missile tests during U.S.-North Korean talks and that North Korea would not use nuclear or conventional weapons against South Korea.

March 8, 2018: South Korean National Security Advisor Chung Eui-yong briefs senior White House officials and President Trump on the high-level discussions between North Korean and South Korean officials in Pyongyang just days earlier, including the commitments made by Kim Jong Un not to conduct nuclear or ballistic missile test while talks with the United States take place. From the White House lawn following his meeting with Trump, Chung Eui-yong announces that Trump accepted Kim
Jong Un's invitation to "meet Kim Jong Un by May to achieve permanent denuclearization." The meeting would be the first between a sitting U.S. President and a North Korean leader. U.S. officials clarified that evening that talks would take place at a place and time to be determined and that "in the meantime all sanctions and maximum pressure must remain."

March 25-28, 2018: Kim Jong Un visits Beijing, meeting with President Xi Jinping, in his first trip outside of North Korea since taking power in 2011 and his first meeting with another head of state.

April 17-18, 2018: U.S. President Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meet in their third major summit. According to a White House statement, "President Trump and Prime Minister Abe confirmed their commitment to achieving the permanent and verifiable denuclearization of North Korea. They also reaffirmed that North Korea needs to abandon all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs. President Trump and Prime Minister Abe underscored that the global maximum pressure campaign will continue until North Korea denuclearizes."

April 18, 2018: The Washington Post reports that CIA Director Mike Pompeo met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in early April. President Trump affirmed the meeting took place in a tweet: "Mike Pompeo met with Kim Jong Un in North Korea last week. Meeting went very smoothly and a good relationship was formed. Details of Summit are being worked out now. Denuclearization will be a great thing for World, but also for North Korea!"

April 20, 2018: A telephone hotline is established between South Korean President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for the first time since the division of the peninsula. The first call between the two leaders is expected before their April 27 summit.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un declares that he will suspend nuclear and missile tests starting on April 21 and that he will shut down the Punggye-ri test site where the previous six nuclear tests were conducted.

April 27, 2018: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in meet in Panmunjom on the border of North and South Korea in the first high-level summit between Kim and Moon and the third ever meeting of North and South Korean leaders. Kim and Moon issue a joint declaration, including agreements to facilitate "groundbreaking advancement" in inter-Korean relations, "to make joint efforts to practically eliminate the danger of war on the Korean peninsula," and to cooperate to "establish a permanent peace regime on the Korean peninsula."

May 8, 2018: Kim Jong Un meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping for the second time in two months, this time in Dalian, China. Chinese state media reports that Kim Jong Un says that North Korea hopes relevant parties can adopt step-by-step and synchronized measures to advance the process of political settlement and eventually achieve denuclearization and lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula.

President Trump announces that Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is travelling to North Korea to meet Kim Jong Un in preparation for the U.S.-North Korean summit.

May 9, 2018: North Korea releases three American detainees, Kim Dong Chul, Tony Kim, and Kim Hak Sog.

May 15, 2018: North Korea cancels talks with South Korea scheduled for the next day and threatened to cancel the Trump-Kim summit, citing discontent with U.S.-South Korean joint military drills known as Max Thunder and indignation with U.S. National Security Advisor John Bolton's remarks suggesting that North Korean denuclearization follow the example of Libya.

May 22, 2018: South Korean President Moon Jae-in meets with U.S. President Trump to discuss trade between the two countries and the upcoming U.S.-North Korean summit on June 12.

May 23, 2018: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo testifies before the House Foreign Affairs Committee. In response to a question, he states that the Trump administration's model for North Korean disarmament is "rapid denuclearization, total and complete that won't be extended over
May 24, 2018: North Korea reports that it destroyed its nuclear testing site at Punggye-ri, setting off explosions to destroy the north, west and south portals to tunnels that could have been used to test nuclear weapons. It is not clear if North Korea completely destroyed the long-abandoned east portal. No nuclear experts were granted access to verify the destruction of the test site. North Korea did transport several international journalists to observe the explosions from a distance.

In a letter to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, President Trump cancels the U.S.-North Korean summit scheduled for June 12 in response to "tremendous anger and hostility" displayed by North Korea in a statement the previous day. "If you change your mind having to do with this most important summit, please do not hesitate to call or write," Trump wrote.

May 25, 2018: In response to Trump's letter, Kim Kye Gwan, North Korean first minister of foreign affairs, states that North Korea "has the intent to sit with the U.S. side.. regardless of ways at any time."

May 26, 2018: South Korean President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un meet unexpectedly for a second time in Panmunjom. The two sides agree to host high-level inter-Korean talks on June 1, to follow with talks between military authorities to reduce tensions and between the Red Cross to push forward scheduled family reunions, to accelerate the April 27 Panmunjom declaration and to ensure that the June 12 U.S.-North Korean summit still goes ahead.

May 27, 2018: U.S. officials travel to North Korea to prepare for a summit between Kim Jong Un and Donald Trump.

May 31, 2018: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo meets with North Korean General Kim Yong Chol in New York to discuss President Trump's expected summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. "In my conversations with Chairman Kim Jong-un in Pyongyang and today with Vice Chairman Kim Yong-chol, I have been very clear that President Trump and the United States objective is very consistent and well known: the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. President Trump has also made it clear that if Kim Jong-un denuclearizes, there is a brighter path for North Korea," Pompeo tells the press.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov meets with Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang. Lavrov expresses support for a phased lifting of sanctions on North Korea in return for steps toward denuclearization and Kim states he is "always ready" to negotiate with Russia.

June 1, 2018: North Korean General Kim Yong Chol meets with President Trump and Secretary of State Pompeo at the White House and delivers a letter to President Trump from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Following the meeting, President Trump announces that the summit with North Korea will take place as originally scheduled on June 12 in Singapore and that it will be the beginning of a "process."

June 12, 2018: U.S. President Trump meets with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Singapore at the Capella hotel in the first summit between the sitting leaders of the two countries. Trump and Kim sign a joint declaration agreeing to "establish new US-DPRK relations," "build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean peninsula" and recover POW/MIA remains. Kim also committed to "work toward complete denuclearization on the Korean peninsula" and Trump committed to provide security guarantees for North Korea.

In a press conference following the summit, Trump also announced other commitments he and Kim had agreed to which were not included in the joint statement, including the cancellation of U.S.-South Korean military exercises.

June 19-20, 2018: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un meets with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, Kim's third visit to China since March, to discuss Kim's summit with Trump.

July 5-7, 2018: U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visits Pyongyang and meets with Kim Yong
Chol "to continue consultations and implement the forward progress" from the June 12 U.S.-North Korean summit. Pompeo characterized the talks as "productive" and "good-faith negotiations" but the North Korean Foreign Ministry released a statement after the visit characterizing U.S. proposals as "unilateral and robber-like denuclearization demands," further claiming that they "go against the spirit of the North-U.S. summit meeting."

July 13, 2018: The Diplomat, in collaboration with the Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey reports that it has discovered the site of a secret North Korean uranium enrichment site, named Kangson by U.S. intelligence. The existence of a second North Korean clandestine uranium enrichment site was first publicly reported in a May 2018 Washington Post article. According to the Diplomat, a U.S. government source confirmed that the identified site corresponded to the one U.S. intelligence has named Kangson and has been monitoring for more than ten years.

July 20, 2018: China and Russia block a U.S. request that the UN Security Council committee monitoring North Korea's compliance with UN sanctions send a letter stating that North Korea is violating a quota on refined petroleum products. The quota was established by a December 2017 UN Security Council resolution.

July 25, 2018: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo confirms that North Korea is dismantling a missile launch facility and continues to produce fissile material in testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

July 27, 2018: The remains of 55 American servicemen who died during the Korean War are flown out of North Korea to be returned to the United States. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un promised to return the remains of American soldiers during the June 12 Singapore Summit.

August 15, 2018: In a speech commemorating South Korean National Liberation Day, President Moon Jae-in says that when he meets with North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un in September, the two leaders will "take an audacious step to proceed toward the declaration of an end to the Korean War and the signing of a peace treaty as well as the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." He adds that "inter-Korean relations is the driving force behind denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." Once peace and denuclearization have been established, Moon says that economic cooperation between the two Koreas, including an inter-Korean rail and joint economic zones, can be pursued "in earnest."

August 20, 2018: The International Atomic Energy Agency's annual report on the application of safeguards in North Korea states that the "continuation and further development of the DPRK's nuclear programme and related statements by the DPRK are a cause for grave concern."

August 23, 2018: Stephen Biegun, former vice president of international government affairs for the Ford Motor Company, is appointed as the State Department's special representative for North Korea. Biegun will "direct U.S. policy towards North Korea and lead... efforts to achieve President Trump's goal of the final, fully verified denuclearization of North Korea." Pompeo also announces that he and Biegun will travel to North Korea the following week.

August 24, 2018: President Trump calls off Secretary of State Pompeo's scheduled trip to Pyongyang with new Special Representative Biegun, citing insufficient progress on the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula in a tweet. Earlier that morning, Kim Yong Chol, vice chairman of North Korea's Workers' Party Central Committee, sends an angry letter to Pompeo, convincing him and Trump that the visit is not likely to succeed, according to Washington Post reporting.

September 9, 2018: North Korea holds a military parade on the 70th anniversary of its founding but does not display any long-range nuclear-capable ballistic missiles, as it has in many recent parades. Li Zhanshu, a high-ranking official in the Chinese Communist Party, watches the parade with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. Li attends as a special envoy of Chinese President Xi Jinping. North and South Korea open their first joint liaison office in Kaesong, establishing a new full-time
person-to-person channel between the two countries.

**September 18-20, 2018:** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in meet for their third summit, this time in Pyongyang.

On September 19, the two leaders agree to the *Pyongyang Joint Declaration*, which includes agreements to expand the "cessation of military hostilities" between the two countries, advance economic, humanitarian and cultural cooperation and exchanges, pursue complete denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula and for Kim to visit Seoul "at an early date." North Korea committed to dismantle the Dongchang-ri missile engine test site and launch platform under the observation of international experts and to take additional steps, like the dismantling of the nuclear facilities in Yongbyon, if the United States "takes corresponding measures in accordance with the spirit of the June 12 US-DPRK Joint Statement."

An agreement on the "implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration in the Military Domain" is adopted as an annex to the Pyongyang Joint Declaration. The annex includes commitments for North and South Korea to establish no-fly zones along the border, halt military drills close to the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between the two countries and dismantle several guard posts inside the DMZ.

**September 24, 2018:** South Korean President Moon Jae-in and U.S. President Donald Trump meet on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly. Moon briefs Trump on the Inter-Korean summit and delivers a message from Kim Jong Un.

**September 26, 2018:** U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo meets with North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. Pompeo accepts an invitation from Kim Jong Un to visit Pyongyang the following month.

**September 27, 2018:** U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo chairs a UN Security Council foreign ministerial-level meeting on North Korea and nonproliferation. Pompeo and several other foreign ministers encourage the council to continue to implement sanctions on North Korea until complete denuclearization is achieved. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi argue that sanctions could be eased in light of increased diplomacy with North Korea.

**September 29, 2018:** North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho speaks at the UN General Assembly. Ri attributes the recent deadlock in negotiations to U.S. "coercive measures" which impede trust building. Without trust, Ri claims, North Korea will not disarm. He states that he has yet to see corresponding measures from the United States to match the steps that North Korea has taken towards disarmament.

**October 7, 2018:** U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo meets with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang. U.S. Special Representative Stephen Biegun and North Korean official Kim Yo Jong also participate in the meeting. State Department Spokesperson Heather Nauert states that Kim "invited inspectors to visit the Punggye Ri nuclear test site to confirm that it has been irreversibly dismantled." They also refined options for the location and date of the upcoming second summit between President Trump and Kim, according to the statement.

**October 9, 2018:** The vice foreign ministers of China, North Korea and Russia hold a trilateral meeting in Moscow, where the three parties release a joint statement reaffirming the will for denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and calling for the UN Security Council to adjust sanctions on North Korea, in light of its steps for denuclearization. The statement also condemned "independent sanctions."

**October 19, 2018:** The United States and South Korea cancel the joint military exercises Vigilant Ace, which is scheduled for December.

**October 25, 2018:** North and South Korea and the UN Command finish removing firearms and troops from the Joint Security Area in Panmunjom, as agreed to in the Sept. 19 Panmunjom declaration.
October 31, 2018: The United States and South Korea agree to form a working group to enhance cooperation on a range of issues related to North Korea, including sanctions implementation and “inter-Korean cooperation that comply with the United Nations sanctions.”

November 2, 2018: Kwon Jong Gun, director of the Foreign Ministry's Institute for American Studies (IFAS) and director general of the Ministry's North American Affairs Department writes that North Korea may consider returning to its previous "byungjin" policy of simultaneously focusing on its nuclear program and the economy if the United States sticks to its current course.

November 7, 2018: A meeting scheduled for the next day between U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and his North Korean counterpart is postponed. The Trump administration initially says the talks were postponed due to Pompeo's schedule but after North Korea admits to canceling the meeting, U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley says Nov. 8 Pyongyang was not ready for the meeting.

November 15, 2018: Vice President Mike Pence tells NBC that the United States will not require a complete list of nuclear weapons and missile sites from North Korea prior to a second summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, anticipated in 2019. Pence says "a verifiable plan" to disclose that information must be reached at the summit.

November 20, 2018: A U.S.-South Korean working group to discuss general issues related to North Korean nuclear negotiations holds its first meeting in Washington, D.C. The group, chaired by U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun and South Korean Special Representative for Korean Peninsula Peace and Security Affairs Lee Do-hoon, discusses denuclearization and lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula, and the implementation of UN Security Council resolution.

November 24, 2018: The UN Security Council issues a sanctions waiver to allow an Inter-Korean joint field study on connecting their railroads to go forward.

December 6, 2018: North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho travels to China for a three-day visit to meet with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi to discuss their countries' relations, the Korean situation and other issues of mutual concern, and reportedly to discuss a summit between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

December 26, 2018: Officials from North and South Korea hold a groundbreaking ceremony in Kaesong for an inter-Korean railroad project, one of the joint projects South Korean President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un agreed to in the April 2018 Panmunjom Declaration.

2019

January 1, 2019: Kim Jong Un delivers his annual New Years Address, stating that he is willing to meet U.S. President Donald Trump at "anytime" and committing "that we would neither make and test nuclear weapons any longer nor use and proliferate them," although it is unclear what Kim means by promising not to "make" nuclear weapons.

January 7-9, 2019: Kim Jong Un travels to Beijing for his fourth summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping. North Korean state news KCNA reports that Kim and Xi discussed the "denuclearization process" and that Xi accepted an invitation to visit North Korea "at a convenient time."

January 9, 2019: U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun reportedly meets with U.S. and international NGO representatives, the United Nations and U.S. government department representatives to discuss the revised U.S. position on humanitarian aid to North Korea to better facilitate aid to the country. Biegun announced the United States was reviewing its humanitarian aid policy to North Korea on Dec. 19, 2018.

January 18, 2019: Top North Korean diplomat Kim Yong Chol travels to Washington, D.C. and meets with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and U.S. President Donald Trump. Kim Yong Chol
meets with Trump for over 90 minutes. Following the meeting, the White House announces that the second summit between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will take place at the end of February at a place to be announced at a later date.

**January 19-21, 2019:** North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui, U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun and South Korean negotiator Lee Do-hoon meet outside Stockholm to discuss "confidence building, economic development and long-term engagement" on the Korean peninsula.

**January 31, 2019:** U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun delivers remarks to Stanford University. Biegun reaffirms that the administration is prepared to move step-by-step towards complete denuclearization in parallel with working towards peace in Korea and that it is willing to defer a complete declaration of North Korea's nuclear assets.

**February 27-28, 2019:** U.S. President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un meet in Hanoi, Vietnam for their second summit. The talks end without a signed agreement. In a U.S. press conference following the summit, Trump and U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo state that the two sides had made progress but that North Korea had called for sanctions to be lifted "in their entirety" in exchange for partial denuclearization which the United States rejected. A senior State Department official tells press that Trump had encouraged Kim to "go all in." North Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs Ri Yong Ho later delivers a statement at a press conference stating that North Korea had requested the partial removal of sanctions in exchange for a permanent halt of nuclear and ballistic missile testing and the full and verifiable dismantlement of the facilities at the Yongbyon nuclear complex. The North Korean state newspaper *Pyongyang Times* welcomes the "constructive and candid exchange of opinions" at the summit.

**March 3, 2019:** South Korea and the United States decide to terminate the annual Key Resolve and Foal Eagle joint military drills.

**March 4, 2019:** IAEA Director-General Yukiya Amano reports to the IAEA Board of Governors that the agency "has not observed any indications of the operation of the 5MW(e) reactor since early December 2018."

**March 5, 2019:** The UN Panel of Experts reports that North Korea continues to evade sanctions.

**March 22, 2019:** U.S. President Donald Trump tweets that he ordered the removal of additional large-scale sanctions on North Korea. It is not clear to which sanctions he is referring. The U.S. Treasury Department imposed sanctions the previous day on two Chinese shipping companies it alleges helped North Korea with sanctions evasion.

**March 29, 2019:** Secretary of State Mike Pompeo meets with South Korean Foreign Minister Kang in Washington, D.C. to discuss moving forward after the U.S.-North Korean summit.

**April 10-11, 2019:** South Korean President Moon Jae-in meets with U.S. President Trump in Washington, D.C. Trump reiterates his preference for a “big deal” with North Korea to “get rid of the nuclear weapons” in comments to press, but keeps the door open for “various small deals that could happen.” Trump also says that he would support joint economic projects between the two Koreas at the right time, but that now is not that time and that sanctions would “remain in place” until denuclearization is complete.

**April 12, 2019:** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un tells the Supreme People’s Assembly that he is willing to try “one more time,” if Washington proposes a third summit. However, the United States has to have the “right stance” and “methodology,” Kim says. He calls for the United States to “lay down unilateral requirements and seek constructive solutions.”

**April 24-25, 2019:** North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin meet in Vladivostock, Russia and agree to forge closer ties.

**May 4, 2019:** North Korea tests a salvo of rockets and a short-range ballistic missile that has not
been tested before.

**May 9, 2019:** North Korea test fires two short-range ballistic missiles, including the new missile tested May 4.

The United States announces that it seized a North Korean vessel, the Wise Honest, for sanctions evasion. The vessel was detained in 2018. North Korea describes the seizure as a "complete denial" of the Singapore summit statement.

**May 10, 2019:** U.S. President Donald Trump says he does not consider North Korea's missile tests a "breach of trust" by Kim Jong Un or a violation of UN Security Council resolutions.

U.S. Special Representative on North Korea Stephen Biegun meets with South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha and presides over a U.S.-South Korean working group meeting in Seoul.

**June 11, 2019:** U.S. President Donald Trump says he received another "beautiful letter" from North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un. Trump says something "will happen very soon that's going to be very positive."

**June 19, 2019:** U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun gives a speech at the Atlantic Council stating that the United States will continue to pursue an agreement on the end state of negotiations before taking incremental steps in tandem with North Korea. Biegun also states that the North Korean negotiating team must be empowered to "negotiate on all the issues" to make progress.

**June 20-21, 2019:** Chinese President Xi Jinping travels to Pyongyang for the first time. During his summit meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, Xi emphasizes the importance of strengthening cooperation between the two countries and praises North Korea's efforts to promote denuclearization.

**June 21, 2019:** The Trump administration notifies Congress it is extending sanctions in several executive orders set to expire on June 26 because of the "existence and risk of proliferation of weapons-usable fissile material" and North Korean policies that pose a threat to U.S. national security.

**June 23, 2019:** North Korean media reports that Kim Jong Un received a letter from U.S. President Donald Trump that contains "excellent content." The letter is dated June 12.

**June 26, 2019:** In an interview, South Korean President Moon Jae-in urges the United States and North Korea to take reciprocal steps to advance negotiations and suggests that inter-Korean economic projects could be "utilized as corresponding measures to induce the North to take denuclearization steps.” Moon says if North Korea dismantled the Yongbyon nuclear complex, “including the plutonium reprocessing facilities and the uranium enrichment facilities,” then it “would be possible to say that denuclearization of North Korea has entered an irreversible stage.” Substantive progress could “help the international community seek a partial or gradual easing of the U.N. Security Council sanctions,” he says.

**June 28, 2019:** U.S. President Donald Trump tweets that he will visit
the DMZ June 30 and says North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un should meet him there.

**June 30, 2019:** U.S. President Donald Trump meets with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un at the DMZ and becomes the first sitting U.S. President to set foot in North Korea. The leaders agree to resume negotiations and say working level talks will restart within the next several weeks.

*Updated by Alicia Sanders-Zakre*

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