UN Security Council Resolutions on North Korea

The United Nations Security Council has adopted nine major sanctions resolutions on North Korea in response to the country’s nuclear and missile activities since 2006.

Each resolution condemns North Korea’s latest nuclear and ballistic missile activity and calls on North Korea to cease its illicit activity, which violates previous UN Security Council resolutions. All nine resolutions were unanimously adopted by the Security Council and all but Resolution 2087 (January 2013) contain references to acting under Chapter VII, Article 41 of the United Nations Charter.

In addition to imposing sanctions, the resolutions give UN member states the authority to interdict and inspect North Korean cargo within their territory, and subsequently seize and dispose of illicit shipments.

The resolutions also call upon North Korea to rejoin the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which it acceded to in 1985 but withdrew from in 2003 after U.S. allegations that the country was pursuing an illegal uranium enrichment program. The Security Council also has called for North Korea to return to negotiations in the Six-Party Talks, which include South Korea, North Korea, China, Japan, Russia and the United States. The Six-Party talks, which took place from 2003-2009, resulted in a joint statement on denuclearization. North Korea also dismantled its plutonium-producing reactor as part of the process, although it has subsequently restarted the reactor. For more on the Six-Party talks, click here.


Prior to passing the first sanctions resolution in 2006, the Security Council passed several resolutions condemning North Korea’s nuclear and missile activities. In response to North Korea’s announcement of intent to withdraw from the NPT in 1993, the Security Council passed Resolution 825, urging North Korea to remain party to the NPT and to honor its nonproliferation obligations under the treaty. Resolution 1695 was passed in 2006 in response to ballistic missile launches in July, and calls on North Korea to suspend activities related to its ballistic missile program. Additional Security Council resolutions on North Korea serve to extend the 1718 Committee mandate. They are not included in this list, but can be found here.

UN Security Council Resolutions Quick Links

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Security Council Resolution 1718

Resolution 1718 was unanimously adopted by the UN Security Council on October 14, 2006, shortly after North Korea’s first nuclear test on October 9. The full text of Resolution 1718 is available here.

Resolution 1718’s Principal Provisions

Resolution 1718:

- Demands North Korea refrain from further nuclear or missile tests.
- Demands North Korea return to the NPT.
- Decides North Korea shall suspend all ballistic missile activities.
- Decides North Korea shall abandon its nuclear program in a “complete, verifiable, and irreversible” manner.
- Decides North Korea shall abandon all WMD activities.
- Calls upon North Korea to return to the Six-Party Talks.

Resolution 1718’s Principal Sanctions

Member states are prohibited from the “direct or indirect supply, sale, or transfer” to North Korea, of:

- Heavy weaponry, such as tanks, armored vehicles, large caliber artillery, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships and missile systems
- Spare parts for the above mentioned heavy weaponry
- Materials and technologies that could contribute to North Korea’s WMD programs and ballistic missile related activities, as set out in prior Security Council documents
- Luxury goods

Member states are also required to:

- Freeze the funds or financial assets of entities designated by the Security Council as providing support for North Korea’s nuclear, missile, and other WMD programs

Resolution 1718’s Monitoring Mechanisms

The resolution established a committee composed of the 15 current members of the Security Council to function as a monitoring body to review and adjust the imposed sanctions and violations of the sanctions. The body was to provide a report on the status of sanctions implementation every 90 days.

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Security Council Resolution 1874

Resolution 1874 was unanimously adopted by the UN Security Council on June 12, 2009, shortly after North Korea’s second nuclear test, which took place May 25. The full text of Resolution 1874 is available here.

Resolution 1874’s Principal Provisions

The resolution reiterated a number of provisions from Resolution 1718. It also called upon North Korea to join the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Resolution 1874’s Principal Sanctions


Sanctions in Resolution 1874 built off several measures first laid out in Resolution 1718. The resolution expanded the arms embargo by banning all imports and exports of weapons, excluding small arms (which required Security Council notification).

Member states were also authorized to:

- Inspect North Korea cargo on land, air, and sea, if the state has reason to believe that it contains prohibited items and seize any prohibited materials or technologies
- Prohibit bunkering services for North Korean ships if the state has reason to believe it is carrying illicit cargo

In addition, member states were called upon to:

- Prohibit public financial support for trade with North Korea that would contributed to nuclear, ballistic missile, or WMD-related activities
- Refuse new loads or credit to North Korea, except for humanitarian or development purposes

**Resolution 1874’s Monitoring Mechanisms**

Resolution 1874 set up a seven-member expert panel to assist the sanctions committee in enforcing the resolution and monitor implementation. Known as the ‘Panel of Experts,’ the group was initially given a mandate for one year and was required to report regularly to the Sanctions Committee on possible violations and recommendations for improving implementation. Later resolutions extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts.

**Security Council Resolution 2087**

The Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2087 on January 22, 2013 after a successful North Korean satellite launch on December 12, 2012. The launch was a violation of Resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009), which prohibited any further development of technology applicable to North Korea’s ballistic missile programs. The full text of Resolution 2087 is available [here](https://www.armscontrol.org).

**Resolution 2087’s Principal Provisions**

Resolution 2087 called for other states to “remain vigilant” in monitoring individuals and entities associated with the North Korean regime. It also directed the sanctions committee to issue an Implementation Assistance Notice if a vessel refused to allow an inspection authorized by its flag state.

**Resolution 2087’s Principal Sanctions**

Resolution 2087 built on sanctions included in Resolutions 1718 and 1874 including:

- Clarifying the catch-all provision
- Clarifying the state’s right to seize and destroy material suspected of heading to or from North Korea
- Directing the sanctions committee to take action to designate individuals or entities that have assisted in sanctions evasion

Resolution 2087 also listed individuals subject now to the travel ban and asset freeze penalties, and entities subject to the asset freeze penalties, for violations under Resolutions 1718 and 1874.
No new monitoring mechanisms were included in Resolution 2087.

Security Council Resolution 2094

The Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2094 on March 7, 2013 in response to North Korea’s third nuclear test on February 12, 2013. The full text of the resolution is available here.

Resolution 2094’s Principal Provisions

Unlike prior resolutions, 2094 explicitly mentioned North Korea’s uranium enrichment in its condemnation of Pyongyang’s nuclear activities.

Additionally, this resolution

- Expressed concern that North Korea was abusing immunities granted to its diplomats by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic and Consular Relations
- Welcomed the Financial Action Task Force’s new recommendation on targeted financial sanctions related to proliferation and urged member states to apply the recommendations

Resolution 2094’s Principal Sanctions

Resolution 2094 expands a number of sanctions measures from earlier resolutions, such as adding nuclear and missile dual-use technologies and luxury goods to the list of banned imports.

Resolution 2094 also designated additional individuals and entities for asset freezes and the travel ban and expanded the designation criteria to include persons or entities suspected of acting on the behalf or controlled by any persons or entities already sanctioned.

The resolution aims to make it more difficult for North Korea to make further progress in its nuclear and ballistic missile programs by hindering its access to hard cash and technological equipment needed to build weapons and pursue uranium enrichment.

The resolution also strengthened the interdiction and oversight authorities for member states by:

- calling for states to inspect and detain any suspected cargo or shipments to or from North Korea that transit through their territory, if the cargo is suspected to contain bulk cash or material that could be used in a nuclear program.
- Directing states to enhance vigilance over North Korea’s diplomatic personnel

New financial sanctions included in the resolution:

- blocked the North Korea regime from bulk cash transfers
- restricted North Korea’s ties to international banking systems

Resolution 2094’s Monitoring Mechanisms

The resolution expanded the panel of experts that assesses implementation of UN Security Council sanctions on North Korea to eight people.
Security Council Resolution 2270

The Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2270 on March 2, 2016 after North Korea conducted a fourth nuclear test and launched a satellite for the second time. The full text of the resolution can be found here.

Resolution 2270’s Principal Provisions

Resolution 2270:

- Prohibits states from providing any specialized teaching or training of North Korean nationals in disciplines which could contribute to North Korea’s proliferation.
- Emphasizes that the North Korean regime has seriously neglected to meet the needs of the North Korean people and has instead prioritized development of its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.
- Decides that North Korea shall abandon all chemical and biological weapons and programs and act in accordance with the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention

Resolution 2270’s Principal Sanctions

Resolution 2270 builds upon sanctions measures from prior resolutions, including:

- Expanding the arms embargo to include small arms and light weapons
- Prohibiting North Korea from servicing and repairing any weaponry sold to third parties
- Prohibiting additional luxury goods

Resolution 2270 also expands interdiction and inspection authority for member states to:

- Mandatory inspections on cargo destined to or originating from North Korea
- Asset freeze on all North Korean government and Worker’s Party entities associated with prohibited activities

Resolution 2270 also designated an additional 16 individuals and 12 entities for asset freezes and travel bans.

New financial sanctions place limits on banking activities of North Korean entities abroad including:

- Prohibiting UN member states from hosting North Korean financial institutions that may be supporting proliferation activities in North Korea
- Prohibiting states from opening new financial institutions or bank branches in North Korea
- Requiring states to terminate existing joint ventures within ninety days of the adoption of the resolution

It also requires that member states repatriate North Korean or other foreign nationals found to be working on behalf of a Security Council resolution-designated entity.

Member states are also prohibited from:

- Chartering or leasing vessels to North Korea, or providing crew services to North Korea or North Korean entities
- Selling or supplying aviation fuel to North Korea so that it cannot be diverted to its ballistic missile program
Resolution 2270’s Monitoring Mechanisms

No new monitoring mechanisms were included in Resolution 2270.

Security Council Resolution 2321

The Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2321 on November 30, 2016, following North Korea’s fifth nuclear test on September 9. Resolution 2321 significantly expanded sanctions on North Korea.

The full text of the resolution can be found here.

Resolution 2321’s Principal Provisions

Resolution 2321:

- Calls on all members to reduce the number of staff at DPRK diplomatic missions and consular posts
- Condemns the DPRK for pursuing nuclear weapons instead of the welfare of its people
- Emphasizes, for the first time, the need for the DPRK to respect the inherent dignity of its people in its territory

Resolution 2321’s Principal Sanctions

Resolution 2321 imposed new sanctions that prohibit North Korea from:

- Exporting minerals, such as copper, nickel, silver, and zinc
- Selling statues
- Selling helicopters
- Selling or transferring iron and iron ore, with exceptions for livelihood purposes
- Selling or transferring coal in amounts that exceed a particular cap annually

Member states were also directed to:

- Limit the number of bank accounts held by diplomats and missions
- Suspend scientific and technical cooperation with North Korea, except for medical purposes

Resolution 2321 also added additional items to the list of prohibited dual-use technologies and designated additional individuals and entities to subject to asset freezes and the travel ban.

Resolution 2321’s Monitoring Mechanisms

Resolution 2321 introduced a standard notification form for coal purchases from North Korea to track imports against the cap set by the resolution. The resolution also directed the Panel of Experts to hold meetings designed to address regional concerns and build capacity to implement the measures in 2321 and other North Korea sanctions.

Security Council Resolution 2371

Resolution 2371 was adopted unanimously by the Security Council on August 5, 2017 in response to North Korea’s two ICBM tests in July. The United States claimed the new sanctions would prevent North Korea from earning over $1 billion each year, although some experts expressed doubt. The full
Resolution 2371’s Principal Provisions

Resolution 2371:

- Regrets North Korea’s massive diversion of its scarce resources toward its development of nuclear weapons and a number of expensive ballistic missile programs
- Reaffirms the Council's support for the Six Party Talks, calls for their resumption, reiterates its support for commitments made by the Six Parties, and reiterates the importance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia
- Decides North Korea shall not deploy or use chemical weapons and calls on North Korea to accede to the Chemical Weapons Convention and comply with its provisions

Resolution 2371’s Principal Sanctions

Resolution 2371 bans the export of several materials, which previous sanctions resolutions had restricted the export of, including:

- Coal
- Iron and iron ore
- Seafood
- Lead and lead ore

The resolution also:

- Adds new sanctions against North Korean individuals and entities, including the Foreign Trade Bank (FTB)
- Prohibits joint ventures between North Korea and other nations
- Allows for the Security Council to deny international port access to vessels tied to violating security council resolutions
- Bans countries from allowing in additional North Korean laborers

Resolution 2371’s Monitoring Mechanisms

Resolution 2371 asks Interpol to publish Special Notices on listed North Koreans for travel bans. It also gives the UN Panel of Exerts additional analytical resources to better monitor sanctions enforcement.

Security Council Resolution 2375

Following North Korea's sixth nuclear test on September 3, 2017 the UN Security Council unanimously adopted UNSCR 2375 on September 11. The resolution, which primarily targeted North Korean oil imports, textile exports and overseas laborers, contained the strongest yet sanctions against North Korea, according to a U.S. press release. The full text of the resolution is available here.

Resolution 2375’s Principal Provisions

- Reiterates its deep concern at the grave hardship that the people in the DPRK are subjected to, condemns the DPRK for pursuing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles instead of the welfare of its people
- Reaffirms its support for the Six Party Talks, calls for their resumption, and reiterates its support for the commitments set forth in the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005 issued by China, the DPRK, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United
Resolution 2375’s Principal Sanctions

Resolution 2375:

- Fully bans textile exports
- Caps refined petroleum product imports at 2 million barrels per year
- Freezes the amount of crude oil imports
- Bans all natural gas and condensate imports
- Prohibits member states from providing authorizations for North Korean nationals to work in their jurisdictions, unless otherwise determined by the committee established UNSCR 1718
- Imposes asset freezes on additional North Korean entities, including the Organizational Guidance Department, the Central Military Commission and the Propagation and Agitation Department
- Directs the 1718 committee to designate vessels transporting prohibited items from North Korea
- Bans all joint ventures or cooperative entities or the expansion of existing joint ventures with DPRK entities or individuals

Resolution 2375 also added additional items to the list of prohibited dual-use technologies and designated additional individuals and entities.

Resolution 2375’s Monitoring Mechanisms

- Provides further guidance for states to conduct interdictions, without the use of force, if the member states have reason to believe the vessel is carrying prohibited cargo.
- If a suspected vessel refuses inspection, the flag state must direct the ship to a port for inspection or risk being designated for an asset freeze or denied port access.

Security Council Resolution 2379

The UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2397 on December 22, 2017 in response to North Korea’s ICBM launch on November 29. The full text of the resolution is available [here](#).

Resolution 2397’s Principal Provisions

- Repeats many of the principles expressed in Resolution 2375
- Acknowledges that North Korean revenue generated by exports and workers overseas contribute to its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs

Resolution 2397’s Principal Sanctions

- Caps North Korean refined petroleum imports at 500,000 barrels per year
- Establishes an annual limit of crude oil imports at four million barrels per year
- Obligates the Security Council to impose additional caps on petroleum imports if North Korea tests another nuclear weapon or ICBM
- Directs countries to expel all North Korean workers immediately, or in two years at the latest
- Bans North Korean exports of food, agricultural products, minerals machinery and electrical equipment
- Bans North Korea from importing heavy machinery, industrial equipment and transportation vehicles
- Designates an additional 16 individuals and 1 entity to the UN sanctions list

Resolution 2397’s Monitoring Mechanisms
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- Requires countries to seize and impound ships caught smuggling illicit items, including oil and coal

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