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Besides all diplomatic discussions, maximum international pressure and Seoul's active attempt to build a peace regime, **North Korea** was never planning to get rid of its weapons of mass destruction, which could be used as a tool to blackmail Seoul and Washington. And indeed, North Korea ended up bombing three major South Korean cities, Seoul, Busan, and Incheon, with nuclear weapons, eradicating more than 500,000 people. How did this happen?

North Korea continued its strategy to indefinitely delay steps toward denuclearization while trying to get disproportionate concessions and sanctions lift from the United States. This allowed North Korea to elaborate its nuclear program year by year, with growing nuclear capabilities reaching up to 100 nuclear weapons by 2030. The international community unsuccessfully The **United States** answer to this growing threat, including imposing heavy economic sanctions, was perceived by North Korea as a "hostile policy". Thus, North Korea has made numerous clear nuclear threats to the US, while avoiding summits and constantly breaking promises.

As for the international community, the U.N. has imposed heavy sanctions on North Korea for its illicit behavior, not stopping the country from continuing to escalate its weapon of mass destruction activities and openly lie about them. Moreover, both **China** and **Russia** eventually ended up shifting from their 2019 position of condemning North Korea's nuclear blast and sharing the international goal of denuclearisation, both because of fear and potential future interest. This means that Russia and China started working in the interest of North Korea, by protecting the nation within the Security Council itself and by continuing to provide North Korea with an economic safety net, even if it was failing to meet its international obligations.

North Korea's ultimate goal since the end of the Korean War has been to weaken the US-South Korean alliance. Characteristically, Kim Jong-un declared in his 2018 New Year's Day speech: "the North and the South improve the relations between themselves and take decisive measures for achieving a

breakthrough for independent reunification” without U.S. interference. And its nuclear program has unfortunately achieved this goal.

Indeed, answering to the growing nuclear threat, the US kept increasing the cost **South Korea** paid for America’s continued protection against North Korea, by hosting the American soldiers. Following the United States, South Korea had to “pay high” to be able to “take advantage of the world’s most powerful army”. This created serious tension in the US-South Korea alliance. Indeed, each year, more and more South Koreans believed that their government should negotiate a lower contribution to the cost-sharing agreement and even completely get rid of American soldiers, eventually leading to violent protests. The United States and South Korea’s failure to reach a deal on how to split the cost of the U.S. military presence as well as to find a peaceful agreement for North Korea’s denuclearization, making the American homeland under great nuclear threat, lead to the official departure of American troops from Korean soil.

The removal of U.S. forces from South Korea has always been a long-standing goal of North Korea. Indeed, the presence of more than twenty-eight thousand U.S. military personnel on the Korean Peninsula served as a deterrent against North Korean aggression. With the American army gone, South Korea would be more vulnerable to extortion and nuclear blackmail. A well-calculated game that North Korea slowly achieved over the years.

North Korea’s next goal is to conquer the South and reunify Korea under Pyongyang, on terms obviously more amenable to North Korea. It would seem delusional for a poor, starving, weak, and badly managed nation to imagine it could take over a rich, strong, and advanced nation such as the Republic of Korea. But with the use of WMD, the chances of the North defeating the South drastically go up. Long story short, North Korea proposed a reunification deal with South Korea, which was obviously rejected besides South Korea’s active desire for peace on the Peninsula, and lead to one of the most deadly nuclear attacks in history.

These attacks highly alerted the international community. All countries need to figure out how to deal with North Korea that is more threatening than ever and is very likely to use its nuclear weapons to obtain what it is asking for, especially to the United States of America...

Other countries involved and positions :

Japan: in serious threat of a nuclear attack. North Korea said: “If Japan persists in provoking the DPRK, the DPRK will do what it wishes to do, indifferent to the island nation.” Before the attacks, Seoul and Tokyo were regularly working together to share North Korean-related intelligence and to ensure security and stability within the region.

To know more : <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/11/30/national/north-korea-warning-japan-missiles/#.XflogkVKgvE>

Pakistan: Pakistan is accused of having supplied North Korea with nuclear technology, in exchange for missiles, and thus, having helped North Korea in its nuclear development. Both countries have close military, economic and diplomatic ties.

Bulgaria: North Korea’s only European ally. Even though it used to strictly adhere to the positions of the international community for denuclearisation, economic interest shifted the country’s position over the years. Bulgaria regularly breaks international policies to help North Korea, in exchange for military and economic aid.

India: Maintained long-term, close ties with North Korea over the years and is North Korea second-biggest trade partner. India closed its eyes on North Korea’s nuclear development, as North Korea said that it “will never allow any action that would create concerns for India's security”.

Australia, Canada, UK, France, Italy: The United States’s top military allies. No relationship with North Korea, totally in favor of economic sanctions held over the years.

Chile, Peru, Brazil: Neutral countries, but heavily dependent to China economically. Position may shift easily depending on negotiations.

Vietnam : Experiences a very turbulent relation with China, especially because of the heated territorial war over the South China Sea, in a context of global environmental crisis.

Mexico : Experiences a failing relationship with the US, especially because of the construction of a wall in the Mexican-American border. However, the US is still its biggest trade partner. Position may shift easily.

Germany : strongly against North Korea's nuclear action

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