

CHRONOLOGY

Major Events Around the Korean Peninsula (November 25, 2002 - February 24, 2003)

November

- 25 A delegation from the headquarters of the Jeju Islanders' Movement of SK visits Pyongyang.

KCBS says that the Presidium of the SPA adopted a decree on October 23, setting up the Mt. Kungang Tourist Zone and on November 13, passed a law for the special zone.

Two Japanese naval ships, one supply ship and its escort, carrying 350 sailors leave port for the Indian Ocean to assist the US-led war on terror.

- 27 A spokesman for the NK Education Ministry issues a statement calling for South Koreans to wage a "sacred war" against the US in response to a pedestrian accident in SK last June, in which an armored vehicle driven by US soldiers crushed two schoolgirls.

A spokesman for the NK Red Cross Society issues a statement blaming its Japanese counterpart for Japan's opposition to its proposal for a hometown visit by a group of Japanese women who had emigrated to the North decades ago along with their pro-Pyongyang Korean husbands.

US President George W. Bush apologizes to SK for a road accident in

which a US army vehicle killed two schoolgirls, prompting anti-US protests.

- 28 At a press conference, Deputy Chief of Staff at the UNC Major-general James Soligan warns that if NK continues to refuse to seek the UNC's consent to cross the military demarcation line, major inter-Korean projects, including the cross-border railway and roads and the Mt. Kungang overland tourism project could be set back.

SK and NK resume landmine clearance operations in the demilitarized zone after work was suspended for more than two weeks.

- 30 IAEA calls on NK to abandon any nuclear weapons program it has, and to accept international inspections.

The UNC and SK Defense Ministry agree to simplify procedures for SK tourists traveling to NK via a newly built cross-border road.

December

- 1 An agreement on scientific cooperation was reached in Pyongyang between the NK Unjong Branch of Academy of Sciences and the Russian Far Eastern Branch of the Academy of Sciences.

- 2 Chinese President Jiang Zemin and Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin sign a joint declaration in Beijing urging the normalization of US-NK relations and diplomatic solution to the weapons crisis in Iraq.
- Kim Yong-nam, chairman of the Presidium of the SPA, receives credentials from the first British Ambassador to North Korea, David Arthur Slinn.
- 3 A mission from the Russian Transportation Ministry launches a joint survey along with a North Korean delegation to check the structure of the Wonsan-Mt. Kumgang railway in Kangwon Province.
- 4 KCNA announces that Foreign Minister Paek Nam-sun on December 2 said the North "cannot accept" the resolution adopted by the International Atomic Energy on November 29 three days earlier, which called on NK to "give up any nuclear weapons program, expeditiously and in a verifiable manner."
- Taiwan gives final approval for its airlines to fly to China for the first time, allowing charter flights to Shanghai during the Chinese New Year holiday.
- WFP executive director James Morris warns the Security Council that a slump in donations could force the WFP to halt work in NK by April 1.
- 5 US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and visiting SK Minister of National Defense Lee Jun issue a joint communiqué that the US and SK remain committed to furthering close cooperation on security issues on the Korean peninsula.
- 7 SK citizens hold a candle light demonstration, protesting the validity of the Army court-martial and demanding a total amendment of the SOFA.
- 8 Inter-Korean working-level talks held at Mt. Kumgang to discuss ways to construct the Kaesong industrial complex, close after a three-day run starting December 6.
- 9 KCNA says that facilities have been established at the March 26 Factory in Pyongyang to conduct research on various kinds of cables necessary for the IT industry.
- Officials from SK and Russia open a two-day meeting in Seoul to discuss the idea of connecting an inter-Korean rail link with the Trans-Siberian Railway.
- 10 US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage says that the US will seek a diplomatic solution to denuclearize NK.
- 11 US agrees to release a NK ship carrying Scud missiles, which was headed for Yemen.
- US and SK officials begin talks on modifying the SOFA.
- 12 A NK Foreign Ministry spokesman issues a statement declaring the North's reopening of idle nuclear facilities in order to generate electricity.
- 13 A spokesman for the NK Foreign Ministry issues a statement condemning the US seizure in the Arabian Sea of a NK cargo ship carrying missiles to Yemen, on December 10.
- The Secretariat of the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland of NK claims that the US movie *Die Another Day* should not be shown in SK because it will instigate inter-Korean confrontation.

- 14 KCNA announces that Ri Je-son, director general of the General Department of Atomic Energy, demanded that the IAEA remove the seals and monitoring cameras from all of its nuclear facilities as soon as possible, in letters dated December 12 and 14 sent to Mohamed Elbaradei, director general of the IAEA.
- SK port workers stage a work stoppage loading 5,100 tons of rice on ship to NK to protest NK's decision to restart its suspected nuclear weapons program.
- Yemen unloads the NK missiles seized by Spanish and US warships in the Arabian Sea.
- 15 The SK and NK Red Cross Societies launch three-day working-level talks to discuss the details of setting up a permanent center for reunions of separated family members.
- The Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland maintains that the North's unfreezing of nuclear facilities is a justifiable reaction to the US strategy to stifle the North's economy, adding NK will not threaten SK.
- 16 A NK Foreign Ministry spokesman says that NK will warmly welcome aid from various international organizations and donor countries, but will never accept any aid with political conditions attached.
- 17 NK deploy six heavy machine guns inside the DMZ in violation of the armistice, the SK military announces.
- The third SK-NK working-level panel discussions for the reconnection of inter-Korean railways and roads close on Mt. Kumgang, after a three-day run.
- 18 A meeting is held at the 6,000-seat April 25 House of Culture in downtown Pyongyang under the sponsorship of the Ministry of People's Armed Forces, in order to praise the military-first leadership of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il. Participating were Vice Marshal Jo Myong-rok, chief of the General Political Bureau of the People's Army; Vice Marshal Kim Yong-chun, chief of the General Staff of the Army; and People's Armed Forces Minister Kim Il-chol, among others.
- A NK spokesman for the inter-Korean committee aimed at flood prevention on the lower Imjin River issues a statement blaming the US for interference in inter-Korean talks.
- 19 A spokesman for the NK delegation to the inter-Korean law-making panel for economic cooperation held in Seoul December 11-13 issues a statement claiming that the US is responsible for the failure of the panel to announce a joint press statement.
- NK demands US compensation for last week's seizure of ship carrying SCUD missiles to Yemen.
- Ruling party candidate Roh Moo-hyun wins SK's presidential election.
- 20 NK and Russia wind up their joint survey of the railway between Wonsan and Mt. Kumgang.
- SK president-elect Roh Moo-hyun tells journalists that he will closely cooperate with the US on the NK nuclear program and will follow incumbent Kim Dae-jung's NK policy.
- 22 KCNA declares that NK had began work of removing seals and monitoring cameras from the frozen nuclear facilities in order to produce electricity.

- 23 A delegation of the Railways Ministry leaves for Russia.
- NK leader Kim Jong-il has a dinner meeting with Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov in Pyongyang.
- 24 A ceremony is held at the April 25 House of Culture in central Pyongyang to mark North Korean Kim Jong-il's inauguration as "supreme" commander of the People's Army 11 years ago.
- 26 North Korea proposes to South Korea holding a joint symposium to change their shared official name, "Korea" into "Corea," in a joint symposium of the Linguistic Institute and History Institute held in Pyongyang.
- 27 Ri Je-son, director general of the General Department of Atomic Energy of NK, sends to Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the IAEA, a letter that NK will expel the IAEA inspectors who have been monitoring its frozen nuclear facilities in Yongbyun.
- 28 A rally is held in Pyongyang to denounce the US anti-North Korea policy, with the participation of Yang Hyong-sop, vice chairman of the Presidium of the SPA.
- KCNA announces in a commentary that the removal of seals and monitoring cameras from all of the nuclear facilities in the North is its sovereign right, and that the move is intended to generate electric power.
- The Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland issues a statement criticizing the US for the rupture in inter-Korean military working-level talks held in Panmunjom on December 23 to discuss military implications of inter-Korean railway connections in the West and a temporary road in the East.
- 29 A spokesman for the NK Foreign Ministry denounces the US for its attempts to internationalize the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula in a bid to create pressure on the North.
- 30 A spokesman for the NK delegation of the Committee for the Promotion of inter-Korean Economic Cooperation says in a statement that the postponement of the ground-breaking ceremonies at the Kaesong Industrial Complex and the Mt. Kumgang tour road were caused by US agitation.
- SK President Kim Dae-jung expresses dissatisfaction over the US containment strategy tailored to economically isolating NK.
- January 2003**
- 1 A group of leaders of the NK Workers' Party, the government and the military visit the Kumsusan Memorial Hall to pay their respects to former North Korean leader Kim Il-sung, whose embalmed body is laid in state there.
- NK clarifies its key policies for the new year in an editorial carried on New Year's Day simultaneously in the newspapers published by its three major institutions: the Workers' Party of Korea, the Korean People's Army and the Kimilsung Socialist Youth League.
- 3 *Rodong Sinmun* tells Japan to abandon its pro-Washington policy, saying that relations between NK and Japan should be improved.
- US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher rejects another appeal from NK for a mutual non-aggression pact and demands that NK dismantle nuclear programs.

- 5 KCNA reiterates that the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula should be settled through dialogue between the US and NK.
- 6 IAEA Board of Governors meeting in Vienna adopts a resolution giving NK one more chance to come into compliance with its NPT obligations, but makes clear that unless NK cooperates fully with the agency the issue will be referred to the Security Council.
- 7 A rally of 100,000 citizens is held in Pyongyang, pledging its commitment to tasks suggested in the joint editorial.
- SK President Kim Dae-jung says that candlelight vigils are not an anti-US protest, and it is wrong simply to address it as such. He adds that recent polls clearly show that the majority of SK people oppose a pullout of US Forces in Korea.
- SK presidential envoy Yim Sung-joon leaves Seoul to meet his counterparts in the U.S. and Japan to discuss tripartite cooperation to resolve the NK nuclear issue.
- TCOG issues a joint statement in Washington that supports the January 6 IAEA resolution calling for NK to fully comply with its NPT agreements.
- The SK Ministry of Construction and Transportation announces that a total of 69 flights occurred between SK and NK last year, a fivefold increase from 2001.
- US President George W. Bush reiterates that the US has no intention of invading NK and calls on NK to comply with its international obligations.
- WFP spokeswoman Christiane Berthiaume announces that the agency needs 80,000 tons of grain immediately for food aid for NK to avoid a new crisis.
- 8 Some 900 members of SK veteran, civic, and Christian groups rally outside Osan US Air Force Base to oppose NK nuclear weapons, in response to the Pyongtek rally for US withdrawal .
- The US State Department announces its willingness for direct talks with NK on how they can meet nuclear obligations, a subtle shift in position designed to save face on both sides, and to resolve the standoff over the NK WMD issue.
- 9 During the standoff with the US, NK proposes holding regular ministerial-level talks with SK on January 21-24.
- 10 A NK spokesman for inter-Korean ministerial-level talks claims in an interview with the KCNA that the USFK has no basis to interfere with inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation in various sectors.
- NK Foreign Minister Paek Nam-sun declares in a letter sent to the President of the UN Security Council that the North's withdrawal from NPT will go into force starting January 11.
- US Secretary of State Colin Powell condemns NK's announced intention to withdraw from the NPT, also expressing desire to continue searching for a solution.
- In reference to the North's statement of withdrawal from the NPT, Yun Kuk-hee, deputy director general of the NK's General Department of Atomic Energy, announces that NK will peacefully take advantage of nuclear energy.
- 11 *Rodong Sinmun* calls on the US to promptly conclude a non-aggression pact with NK as proposed by the North on October 25 last year.
- 12 *Rodong Sinmun* stresses that the North has no option but to secede from the

- NPT because of the US and IAEA.
- 13 NK ambassador to China Choe Jin-su, at a news conference in Beijing, issues that the development, testing, deployment and export of its missiles is the sovereign right of NK.
- Rodong Sinmun* reiterates that the US should compensate for seizure in the open seas off Yemen of a North Korean cargo ship carrying dozens of missiles.
- SK President-elect meets with US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly.
- 14 Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visits Tokyo's Yasukuni shrine for the third consecutive year.
- Maurice Strong, special envoy of United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, visits Pyongyang.
- US President George W. Bush says that he will not negotiate with NK for "bad behavior," and also offered that he will consider reviving his plan to give NK energy and food aid if NK stops developing nuclear weapons.
- 15 Kim Yong-sun, chairman of the Asia-Pacific Peace Committee meets in Pyongyang Chung Mong-hun, chairman of South Korea's Hyundai Asan Corp., which, in recent years has promoted a tourism project to attract South Koreans to Mt. Kumgang in the North.
- On a visit to the Yongsan US military base, SK President-elect Roh Moo-hyun announces the need for US forces to remain in SK to maintain peace and stability in Northeast Asia.
- The NK Foreign Ministry issues a statement rejecting the recent US offer for food and energy aid, predicated on the North's dismantlement of its alleged secret nuclear weapons program.
- 16 A NK Foreign Ministry spokesman issues a statement denouncing Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's recent visit to the Yasukuni Shrine as a betrayal of the Pyongyang Declaration between North Korea and Japan in September 2002.
- Kim Yong-nam, chairman of the Presidium of the SPA, meets in Pyongyang with Maurice Strong, special envoy of UN General Secretary Kofi Annan.
- 17 NK expresses its thanks to SK for 400,000 tons of rice provided on credit—in a telephone call by Pak Chang-ryon, the North's chief delegate of Inter-Korean Economic and Cooperation Promotion Committee Talks and first vice chairman of the State Planning Commission under the Cabinet, to his SK counterpart Yoon Jin-shik, vice minister of the finance and economy.
- 18 President Vladimir Putin's special envoy Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov arrives in Pyongyang to discuss ways to resolve the nuclear weapons issue with North Korean senior officials.
- 19 *Agence France-Presse* reports that the US Pentagon has been quietly rethinking its military posture in SK on ways to reduce the size and composition of its 37,000-strong force there.
- 20 Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Guangya and US Under Secretary of State John Bolton hold the first round of consultations at the vice-foreign ministerial level on strategic security, multilateral arms control and non-proliferation in Beijing.

NK leader Kim Jong-il meets in Pyongyang with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov, and accepts a personal letter from Russian President Vladimir Putin.

KCNA announces that the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula can be solved only when the US guarantees the security of North Korea by concluding a non-aggression pact with the North.

- 21 KCNA releases a "detailed report" on the background of the North's withdrawal from the NPT.

KCNA urges SK to push for reunification of the divided Korea and resist "US imperialists."

The ninth round of inter-Korean ministerial-level talks begins in Seoul.

- 22 SK and NK agree on constructing a permanent meeting site for separated family reunions in Goseung-gun, NK, during the Inter-Korea Red Cross working-level meeting at Mt. Kumgang.

South Korean officials arrive in Pyongyang for a meeting with their North Korean counterparts to deal with the question of linking roads and railways of the two Koreas.

- 23 KCNA announces that the Cabinet recently held its enlarged plenary session in Pyongyang.

- 24 The Flood Damage Rehabilitation Committee spokesman says that NK will not receive food aid from the US if conditions are attached.

Inter-Korean contact on the co-hosting of inter-Korean events took place in Pyongyang (January 21-24). Delegates from the two sides agree to work together to jointly host the March 1

People's Meeting for Peace and Unification, the third anniversary of the June 15 South-North Joint Declaration, the August 15 Liberation Day and the October 3 National Foundation Day, in Seoul or Pyongyang.

The 9th inter-Korean ministerial talks end in Seoul (January 21-24). Both sides agree to work together for a peaceful resolution of the NK nuclear issue and to continue inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects.

- 25 Delegates to the meeting agree on practical matters regarding connection of the Seoul-Sinuiju Railway and the Donghae (East Coast) Railway and parallel roads running along the two lines.

SK President-elect Roh Moo-hyun expresses willingness to engage in an unconditional dialogue with NK in a bid to solve the nuclear issue.

KCNA reiterates in a commentary that the US should guarantee the security of the NK regime not through official statements or documents, but through conclusion of a non-aggression pact with the North.

- 26 A group of athletes leaves Pyongyang to take part in the fifth Winter Asian Games 2003 to be held in Aomori City, Japan, during February 1-8.

A NK Foreign Ministry spokesman announces that NK strongly opposes any attempt to internationalize the nuclear issue and urges direct dialogues between the US and NK.

The two Korean Red Cross societies exchange lists of 200 candidates each, who will participate in the 6th reunion of separated families February 20-25 at Mt. Kumgang.

- 27 South and North Korea conclude at the truce village of Panmunjom, a tentative agreement on cross-border passage over temporary roads in the eastern and western coastal areas.
- SK and NK hold an inter-Korean military working-level meeting at Panmunjom, where they adopt an interim agreement on military guarantees for the use of temporary roads in South-North control areas in the East and West coastal regions.
- 28 KCNA accuses the US of planning a massive military attack against NK with the help of SK.
- NK Foreign Ministry comments on US President George W. Bush's State of the Union address, calling it an undisguised declaration of aggression to topple its system.
- The Tokyo Metropolitan Police announces the investigation of an alleged NK agent who reportedly used Japan as a base from which to spy on SK for decades
- 29 Lim Dong-won, special envoy of SK President Kim Dae-jung, returns to Seoul from a three-day visit to North Korea where he held meetings with North's senior officials, including Kim Yong-sun, secretary of the Workers' Party Central Committee, aimed at helping settle North's nuclear issue.
- 30 SK government investigators reveal that about \$200 million was secretly transferred from a state-controlled bank to NK one week before the landmark inter-Korean summit in June 2000.
- SK President-elect Roh Moo-hyun, attempting to resolve the current nuclear standoff, states that he opposes UN sanctions on NK.
- 31 US spy satellites over NK have detected what appear to be trucks moving the country's stockpile of 8,000 nuclear fuel rods out of storage, the *New York Times* reports.
- February 2003**
- 2 SK President-elect Roh Moo-hyun's envoy leaves Seoul for the US, aiming to promote a peaceful resolution of the NK nuclear issue.
- NK's Asia-Pacific Peace Committee issues a statement denouncing the debate in SK over Hyundai Merchant Marine's secret payment of 223.5 billion won to NK, saying it was "caused by the impure intentions of anti-reunification elements."
- 3 Radio Pyongyang denounces US moves to refer NK's nuclear weapons issue to the UN Security Council as an "infamous act."
- 5 A spokesman for the NK Foreign Ministry says North Korea has restarted operation of its nuclear facilities.
- Minju Joson*, newspaper of the NK Cabinet, says that NK will never take part in multilateral talks to solve its nuclear weapons issue.
- Senior members of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee criticize the Bush administration's NK policy as inadequate, calling on the President to initiate talks to halt NK's nuclear program.
- SK opens a road across the DMZ with NK, the first such connection between the two Koreas in five decades. A 106-member SK civilian delegation embarks on their first trip to Mt. Kumgang over the land route.

- KCNA warns in a commentary that NK will take self-defense measures regarding the US build-up of military forces around the Korean peninsula.
- 7 KCNA says in a commentary that the sole way to settle NK's nuclear issue is through direct and equal talks between NK and the US.
- 8 *Rodong Sinmun* says that war can be prevented through *Minjok Gongjo*, a Korean term meaning cooperation between South Korea and North Korea.
- 9 The two Koreas exchange data at the border village of Panmunjom regarding the whereabouts of 200 individuals from each side, in preparation for the 6th reunion of separated families, slated for February 20.
- 10 SK Prime Minister Kim Suk-soo states that he believes NK does not possess nuclear weapons, contradicting US assertions that NK has one or two atomic bombs.
- US Ambassador to Japan Howard H. Baker warns of a possible NK missile test over Japan.
- 11 A NK delegation leaves Pyongyang to take part in the fourth round of inter-Korean Economic Cooperation Promotion Committee meetings to be held in Seoul.
- 12 CIA director George Tenet, at a Senate committee, states that NK has an untested ballistic missile capable of hitting the US. The board of the IAEA refers the NK nuclear issue to the UN Security Council.
- 13 Japanese Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba states that Japan will launch a military strike against NK if it has firm evidence that NK is ready to attack with ballistic missiles.
- SK President-elect, in a meeting with labor leaders, states that he will not go along with the US in any attack on NK to halt its nuclear program.
- US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld expresses support for shifting USFK troops away from the fortified border between the Koreas and from Seoul, adding that there might even be an overall reduction in the 37,000 US troops stationed on the peninsula.
- 14 KCNA says that Vice Foreign Minister Choe Su-hon, in his capacity in the North as chairman of the National Coordinating Committee for UNICEF, and Richard Bridle, UNICEF representative, signed on February 10 joint project plans for the year 2003.
- In a telephone call from NK Red Cross Society Chairman Jang Jae-on to SK counterpart Suh Young-hoon, NK agrees to allow SK separated family members to take the overland route for the meeting with their relations in North.
- SK President Kim Dae-jung apologizes for the scandal over Hyundai's illegal payments to NK before the historic summit in 2000.
- KCNA, in its first response to the IAEA's decision on February 12, says that it is not NK but the US that triggered the present nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula.
- The fourth meeting of the Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation Promotion Committee is held in Seoul.
- 16 On the occasion of Kim Jong-il's sixty-

- first birthday, NK hosts various events.
- 17 A spokesman for the Panmunjom Mission of the People's Army says that if the US imposes sanctions against NK, the North will withdraw from the July 1953 armistice agreement.
- 18 A NK Foreign Ministry spokesman issues a statement insisting that NK actions in connection with its nuclear facilities were not "brinkmanship tactics" aimed at economic gain, but only at "removing the unreasonable military threat" posed by the US on the North.
- 19 NK Foreign Minister Paek Nam-sun and Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Wang Yi hold talks, agreeing that dialogue is the right way to resolve the current US-NK nuclear stand-off.
- 20 A NK fighter jet briefly crosses the western sea border with SK, but retreats without incident when two SK jets race to the area.
- An inter-Korean joint exhibition forced conscription of Koreans and on crimes committed by the Japanese closes in Pyongyang.
- The sixth round of the reunions of separated families opens on Mt. Kumgang.
- 21 An overland trip to Kaesong is made by South Koreans including Chung Mong-hun, chairman of Hyundai Asan.
- 22 Glyn Ford, member of the European parliament from the British Labour Party, flies into Pyongyang.
- 24 North Korea launches an anti-ship cruise missile into the East Sea.

ABBREVIATIONS

DMZ	demilitarized zone	SPA	Supreme People's Assembly
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency	TCOG	Trilateral Coordination and Oversight Group
KCBS	(North) Korean Central Broadcasting Station	UNC	United Nations Command
KCNA	(North) Korean Central News Agency	UNICEF	UN International Children's Emergency Fund
NK	North Korea	USFK	US Forces Korea
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty	WFP	World Food Programme
SK	South Korea	WMD	weapons of mass destruction
SOFA	status of forces agreement		

