

North Korea: A Chronology of Events from 2016 to 2020

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May 5, 2020

Congressional Research Service

7-....

www.crs.gov

R46349

Contents

Introduction	1
Chronology	3
1994.....	3
1998.....	3
2003.....	4
2005.....	4
2006.....	4
2007.....	5
2009.....	5
2011.....	5
2012.....	6
2013.....	6
2016.....	6
2017.....	10
2018.....	19
2019.....	32
2020.....	40

Figures

Figure 1. Timeline of North Korean Ballistic Missile and Nuclear Tests, UNSC Sanctions, and Major Summits, 2016-2020	1
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Contacts

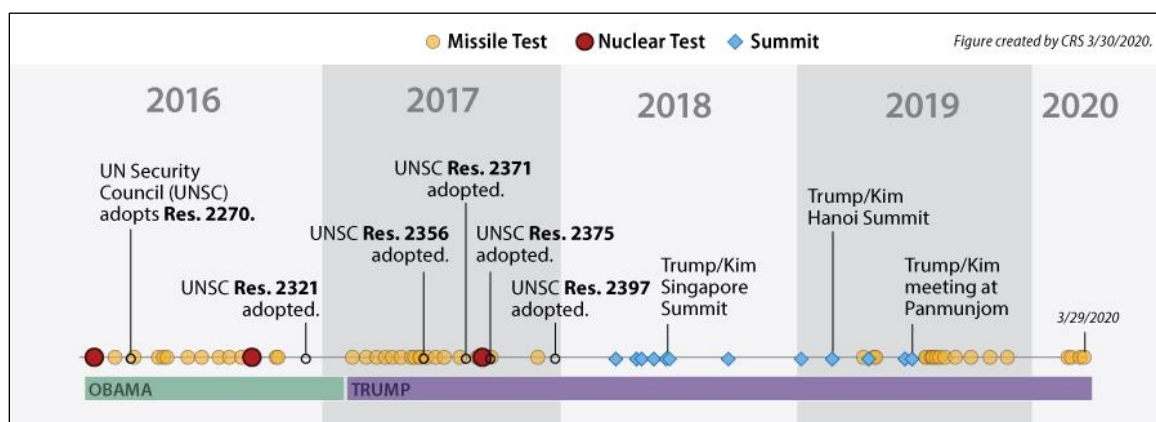
Author Contact Information	43
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Introduction

This report provides a detailed chronology of events relevant to U.S. relations with North Korea from January 2016, when North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test, through the end of March 2020. (For background, the chronology includes a number of milestone events before 2016.) That nuclear test launched a new period of concentrated attention on North Korea (officially the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, or DPRK). The Obama and Trump Administrations made denuclearization of North Korea one of their top foreign policy priorities, and Congress has devoted considerable attention to North Korea and the executive branch’s North Korea policy.

The 2016-March 2020 period can be divided into two chapters: the “belligerent phase” and the “diplomatic phase.” During the belligerent phase, in 2016 and 2017, North Korea conducted scores of missile tests and three nuclear weapons tests. (See **Figure 1.**) The Obama and Trump Administrations responded by expanding multilateral and unilateral sanctions against North Korea. Under its “maximum pressure” approach, the Trump Administration led the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)—including China and Russia—to pass three new sanctions resolutions that expanded the requirements of U.N. member states to halt or curtail their military, diplomatic, and economic interactions with North Korea. In repeated public remarks during 2017, Trump Administration officials, including the President, emphasized the possibility of launching a preventive military strike against North Korea.¹

Figure 1. Timeline of North Korean Ballistic Missile and Nuclear Tests, UNSC Sanctions, and Major Summits, 2016-2020



Source: Derived by CRS from various news, scholarly, and government publications.

Notes: Missile tests include long-range, medium-range, and short-range devices.

The diplomatic phase began in early 2018. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un dropped North Korea’s belligerent posture and embarked on a “charm offensive” that led to a flurry of diplomatic activity. Over an 18-month period, Kim held 12 summit meetings with the leaders of several major regional powers: five with Chinese President Xi Jinping, three with South Korean President Moon Jae-in, three with President Trump, and one with Russian President Vladimir Putin. In the course of these events, Kim publicly stated that he would “work toward complete

¹ For more, see CRS Report R41259, *North Korea: U.S. Relations, Nuclear Diplomacy, and Internal Situation*, coordinated by Emma Chanlett-Avery.

denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.”² To that end, he pledged not to conduct nuclear or long-range missile tests while dialogue continued and agreed to the “permanent dismantlement” of the Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center “as the United States takes corresponding measures.”³ South Korea, North Korea, and the United States agreed to build a “peace regime,” the first step of which apparently would be a declaration formally ending the Korean War (1950-1953). In addition, President Trump unilaterally cancelled most large-scale U.S.-South Korea military exercises, a step long sought by North Korea and China. The two Koreas signed a military confidence-building agreement designed to reduce tensions, particularly at the demilitarized zone that separates North and South Korea.

Since Kim and President Trump’s first summit in Singapore in June 2018, however, little progress has been made on denuclearization, despite two more Kim-Trump meetings (a February 2019 summit in Hanoi and a one-hour June 2019 meeting in Panmunjom). Since the June 2019 meeting, only one round of talks has been held and it did not produce a breakthrough. U.S. officials say their North Korean counterparts have refused to engage in additional negotiations. The deadlock largely is due to disagreements over the timing and sequencing of concessions that each side should provide.⁴ In particular, North Korea is seeking significant sanctions relief in return for the steps it claims it already has taken, but U.S. officials have said sanctions will not be eased until denuclearization is complete.⁵

Meanwhile, North Korea appears to be enhancing its military capabilities. In addition to continuing to produce nuclear material, between May 2019 and late March 2020, North Korea conducted multiple short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) tests; such tests violate United Nations Security Council prohibitions. Its motivation was possibly to advance the reliability of its solid fuel and guidance systems and develop capabilities to thwart short-range missile defense systems. In February 2020 written testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Commander of U.S. Northern Command said “recent engine testing suggests North Korea may be prepared to flight test an even more capable ICBM design that could enhance Kim’s ability to threaten our homeland during a crisis or conflict.”⁶ President Trump has dismissed the significance of these tests. Since the Hanoi summit, North Korea also has largely refused to interact with South Korea, spurning Moon’s efforts.

In a possible signal that the active diplomatic phase of current U.S.-DPRK relations may be coming to an end, Kim in December 2019 announced that, due to the United States’ policies “to completely strangle and stifle the DPRK ... there is no ground” for North Korea to continue to maintain its nuclear and missile testing moratorium. Kim criticized the United States’ continuation of sanctions, joint military exercises with South Korea, and shipments of advanced military equipment to South Korea. Kim warned, “the world will witness a new strategic weapon

² White House, “Joint Statement of President Donald J. Trump of the United States of America and Chairman Kim Jong-un of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea at the Singapore Summit,” June 12, 2018.

³ Blue House, “Pyeongyang Joint Declaration of September 18,” September 19, 2018; “South Korean TV Carries Full Text of South Korean Special Envoy’s Briefing on Result of North Visit,” Opensource.gov, KPW2018030647866849 Seoul YTN in Korean 1100 GMT 06 Mar 18.

⁴ For more, see CRS Insight IN11067, *The February 2019 Trump-Kim Hanoi Summit*, coordinated by Mark E. Manyin.







⁵ U.S. Department of State, “Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo with Lars Larson of the Lars Larson Show,” November 1, 2018.

⁶ Testimony of General Terrence J. O’Shaughnessy, Commander, United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command, U.S. Congress, Senate Armed Services Committee, “United States Northern Command and United States Strategic Command,” 116th Cong., 2nd sess., February 13, 2020.


to be possessed by the DPRK in the near future.” The statement noted that this could be adjusted depending on the “U.S. future attitude.”⁷

This timeline utilizes a larger database of North Korea-related events that CRS has created. The database can be used to create smaller thematic timelines, for example, of North Korean missile tests. Joshua Williams, a former CRS research associate, played a vital role in creating the database. For more CRS products covering North Korea, see CRS Report R45056, *CRS Products and Experts on North Korea*, by Mark E. Manyin.


Chronology

Legend					
	<u>LEGISLATION</u>		<u>AGREEMENT</u>		<u>SUMMIT/LEADER MEETING</u>
	<u>MISSILE ITEMS</u>		<u>NUCLEAR ITEMS</u>		<u>SANCTIONS</u>

1994

Date	Event	
10/21/1994		The United States and North Korea sign the Agreed Framework, which commits North Korea to freeze and eventually dismantle its plutonium production program under international inspection in return for several kinds of assistance from the United States and other countries. Both countries commit to political and economic normalization. The Agreed Framework remains in place until 2002, when it effectively collapses. ⁸

1998

Date	Event	
8/31/1998		North Korea launches the Taepodong-I missile intercontinental ballistic missile as a space launch vehicle (SLV), which it calls the Paektusan-I. The missile fails to put a satellite into orbit after the third stage fails.


⁷ “Report on 5th Plenary Meeting of 7th C.C., WPK,” *Korean Central News Agency*, January 1, 2019.

⁸ For more on the Agreed Framework, see CRS Report R45033, *Nuclear Negotiations with North Korea*, by Emma Chanlett-Avery, Mark E. Manyin, and Mary Beth D. Nikitin.




2003

Date	Event
8/27/2003	The first round of the Six-Party Talks over North Korea's denuclearization are held in Beijing, involving China, Japan, North Korea, Russia, South Korea, and the United States. ⁹

2005


Date	Event
9/19/2005	 <p>After their fourth round of Six-Party talks, the six parties issue a joint statement outlining principles for achieving verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The DPRK agrees to abandon "all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs." The statement outlines compromises on the provision of light-water nuclear reactors and other energy assistance to the DPRK, U.S. security guarantees, normalization of diplomatic relations between the DPRK and the United States and Japan, and the negotiation of a peace treaty. Follow-up negotiations stall almost immediately, however, particularly after the U.S. Treasury Department's September 2005 designation of Banco Delta Asia (BDA), a bank in the Chinese territory of Macau, as a financial institution of primary money laundering concern, due to suspected counterfeiting.</p>

2006




Date	Event
7/5/2006	 <p>North Korea launches the Taepodong-2 intercontinental ballistic missile as an SLV which it calls the Paektusan-2. It explodes shortly after launch, failing to put a satellite into orbit.</p>
10/9/2006	 <p>North Korea conducts its first nuclear test, with a seismic magnitude of 4.1 and estimated explosive yield of less than a kiloton TNT equivalent.</p>
10/14/2006	 <p>The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1718 condemning the October 2006 nuclear test, demanding North Korea refrain from conducting nuclear tests or launching ballistic missiles, and enacting certain sanctions.</p>

⁹ For more on the Six-Party Talks, see CRS Report R45033, *Nuclear Negotiations with North Korea*, by Emma Chanlett-Avery, Mark E. Manyin, and Mary Beth D. Nikitin.

2007

Date	Event
2/13/2007	 <p>The six parties reach an agreement to begin the initial 60-day phase to implement the 2005 Joint Statement. North Korea agrees to disable all nuclear facilities and provide a “complete and correct” declaration of all its nuclear programs, in exchange for the delivery of heavy fuel oil and removal of the United States’ Trading with the Enemy Act and State Sponsors of Terrorism designations. Separately, the United States assures North Korea that it will return frozen funds from Banco Delta Asia to North Korea, which it does later in 2007. IAEA inspectors return to North Korea in July 2007 to monitor and verify the shut-down, install seals, and monitor facilities at Yongbyon, and maintain a continuous presence there until mid-April 2009. During this nearly two-year period, agreement on verification measures prove elusive, contributing to tensions that ultimately lead to the Six-Party Talks’ collapse.</p>




2009

Date	Event
4/5/2009	 <p>North Korea launches its modified Taepodong-2 missile as the Unha-2 space launch vehicle (SLV), but fails to put a satellite into orbit after it falls into the Pacific Ocean. The following week, the UNSC condemns the launch as a violation of UNSC Resolution 1718 and calls for additional punitive measures. In response, North Korea announces its withdrawal from the Six-Party Talks, expels international monitors, and restarts its Yongbyon plutonium reprocessing facility.</p>
5/25/2009	 <p>North Korea conducts its second nuclear test, with a seismic magnitude of 4.5 and estimated explosive yield of 2-5 kilotons.</p>
6/12/2009	 <p>The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 1874, which condemns the May 2009 nuclear test, enacts additional sanctions, and establishes a seven-member Panel of Experts to assist the U.N. committee monitoring implementation of sanctions against North Korea.</p>

2011

Date	Event
12/17/2011	North Korean leader Kim Jong-il dies and is succeeded by his son, Kim Jong-un.


2012













Date	Event	
2/29/2012		<p>The United States and North Korea separately announce agreement on a number of items. North Korea commits to a long-range missile testing moratorium; a nuclear testing moratorium; a moratorium on nuclear activities, including uranium enrichment at Yongbyon; and a return of IAEA inspectors to the Yongbyon nuclear facilities. Separately, the United States announces that the two countries would hold further talks to finalize details of a 240,000 metric ton food assistance program. U.S. officials indicate their hope that collectively these steps will pave the way for a return to denuclearization under the Six-Party Talks process.</p> <p>Less than three weeks later, however, the “Leap Day agreement” begins to unravel. On March 16, 2012, North Korea announces that it would launch an “earth observation satellite” in April, in violation of UNSC resolutions. During their talks, U.S. officials reportedly told their North Korean counterparts that the United States would regard a satellite launch as a violation of the agreement the two sides were negotiating. After North Korea proceeds with the launch on April 13, the United States suspends its portion of the Leap Day arrangement. Thereafter, North Korea follows suit.</p>
4/13/2012		North Korea launch of the Unha-3 SLV fails and does not put a satellite into orbit as intended.
12/12/2012		North Korea successfully launches the Unha-3 space launch vehicle and successfully places the Kwangmyongsong-3 earth observation satellite into orbit.













2013









Date	Event	
1/22/2013		The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2087, condemning the December 2012 ballistic missile test launch and expanding sanctions.
2/12/2013		North Korea conducts its third nuclear test, with a seismic magnitude of 5.0 and a yield of “several kilotons,” according to the Director of National Intelligence.
3/7/2013		The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2094, which condemns the February 2013 nuclear test and expands sanctions.

2016







Date	Event	
1/6/2016		North Korea conducts its fourth nuclear test with a seismic magnitude of 5.1, and claims it was a “hydrogen bomb.” A White House statement said data was “not consistent” with a hydrogen (thermonuclear) device.







Date	Event	
1/11/2016	The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations holds a closed briefing to assess the recent North Korea nuclear test.	
1/13/2016	The House Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific holds a hearing, "The U.S. Response to North Korea's Nuclear Provocations."	
2/7/2016		North Korea puts an earth observation satellite into orbit with the Unha-3 space launch vehicle (the Kwangmyongsong-4, a satellite launch vehicle (SLV) variant of the Taepodong-2 ICBM).
2/18/2016	 	President Obama signs H.R. 757/P.L. 114-122, the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016, which expands U.S. sanctions against North Korea by the U.S. government.
3/2/2016		The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2270, which condemns both the January 2016 nuclear test and the February 2016 SLV test, which "used ballistic missile technology." The resolution expands sanctions on North Korea, by—among other items—imposing restrictions on North Korea's trade in entire product categories, such as coal, North Korea's most important export item.
3/2/2016		The Treasury Department sanctions 5 North Korean entities—including North Korea's supreme policymaking body at that time, the National Defense Commission—and 12 North Korean individuals for prohibited activities.
3/7/2016	The U.S. and South Korean militaries hold their annual joint Key Resolve and Foal Eagle exercises.	
3/9/2016		North Korea state-run media publishes pictures that show Kim Jong-un next to a claimed "miniaturized" nuclear device.
3/10/2016		South Korea reports that North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles (SCUD-C).
3/16/2016		President Barack Obama issues Executive Order 13722 that blocks property and interests belonging to the Government of North Korea or the Workers' Party of Korea that come under U.S. jurisdiction; designates entities that operate in DPRK's transportation, mining, energy, or financial services sectors (or other sectors as designated); and allows the Treasury Department to sanction North Koreans for human rights abuses, use of overseas workers, and other actions. The Treasury Department sanctions 15 North Korean entities—including the ruling Workers' Party of Korea—20 North Korean ships, and 2 North Korean individuals.
3/18/2016		North Korea fires two medium-range ballistic missiles (Nodong).
3/21/2016		North Korea fires five short-range projectiles.
3/24/2016		Kim Jong-Un oversees a test of a solid-fuel rocket engine.
4/1/2016		North Korea unsuccessfully test fires a submarine-launched ballistic missile.









Date	Event	
4/15/2016		North Korea test launches a new intermediate-range ballistic missile, the Musudan, on the birthday of former North Korean supreme leader Kim Il-sung. The test is a failure.
4/15/2016	U.S. and South Korean militaries hold the annual “Max Thunder” combined military exercises.	
4/23/2016		North Korea test launches a submarine-launched ballistic missile (Pukguksong-I).
4/28/2016		North Korea’s test-launches of two intermediate-range ballistic missiles (Musudan) fail.
5/6/2016		North Korea’s Workers’ Party holds a Party Congress, its seventh and the first since 1980. Kim Jong-un says, “As a responsible nuclear weapons state, our Republic will not use a nuclear weapon unless its sovereignty is encroached upon by any aggressive hostile forces with nukes as it had already declared, and it will faithfully fulfill its obligation for non-proliferation and strive for the global denuclearization.”
5/30/2016		North Korea’s test of an intermediate-range ballistic missile (Musudan) fails.
6/3/2016		The Treasury Department issues a determination that North Korea is a jurisdiction of money laundering concern. Based on this determination, on December 9, 2016, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) finalizes a rule that prohibits U.S. banks from providing U.S. correspondent accounts to third-country banks to process transactions for North Korean financial institutions.
6/21/2016		North Korea’s test launch of two intermediate-range ballistic missiles (Musudan) fails.
6/22/2016	U.N. Security Council convenes and condemns North Korean intermediate range ballistic missile tests.	
7/6/2016		The Treasury Department sanctions Kim Jong-un, ten other top North Korean officials, and five North Korean government organizations, “for their ties to North Korea’s notorious abuses of human rights.”
7/8/2016	The United States and South Korea announce they will deploy a U.S. Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defense battery to U.S. Forces Korea.	
7/9/2016		North Korea’s test of a submarine-launched ballistic missile (Pukguksong-I) fails soon after launch.
7/18/2016		North Korea flight tests two short-range (SCUD-C) and one medium-range ballistic missiles (Nodong).
8/3/2016		North Korea flight tests two medium-range ballistic missile (Nodong), one of which explodes shortly after launch.
8/22/2016	The U.S. and South Korean militaries hold the annual combined Ulchi Freedom Guardian exercise.	
8/24/2016		North Korea test launches a submarine-launched ballistic missile (Pukguksong-I).

Date	Event	
9/5/2016		North Korea flight tests three medium-range ballistic missiles (ER Scud).
9/6/2016	The U.N. Security Council convenes and condemns recent North Korean ballistic missile tests.	
9/9/2016		North Korea conducts what it claims is the test of a hydrogen bomb, its fifth nuclear test with a seismic magnitude of 5.3. Estimated yield is between 15 and 25 kilotons.
9/13/2016	The United States flies two nuclear-capable B-1B bombers over South Korea following North Korea's nuclear test.	
9/14/2016	The House Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific holds a hearing, "North Korea's Perpetual Provocations: Another Dangerous, Escalatory Nuclear Test."	
9/19/2016	The Senate Committee on Armed Services holds a closed briefing to examine recent North Korea nuclear test, missile tests, and regional dynamics.	
9/20/2016		North Korea conducts a test of a liquid-fueled rocket engine (RD-250), which it claims would be used to put satellites into orbit.
9/28/2016	The Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy holds a hearing, "The Persistent Threat of North Korea and Developing an Effective U.S. Response."	
10/15/2016		North Korea flight test of an intermediate-range ballistic missile (Musudan) fails.
10/20/2016		North Korea flight test of an intermediate-range ballistic missile (Musudan) fails.
10/25/2016	Speaking at the Council on Foreign Relations, U.S. Director of National Intelligence James Clapper says that North Korean denuclearization is "probably a lost cause" because it is "their ticket to survival."	
11/30/2016		The U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 2321, which condemns the recent nuclear and ballistic missile tests and expands sanctions, including an annual cap on the amount of coal North Korea can export.
12/2/2016		The Treasury Department sanctions 16 entities—including North Korea's national flag carrier, Air Koryo—and 7 individuals for conducting prohibited activities.
12/9/2016	South Korea's National Assembly votes to impeach President Park Geun-hye.	
12/9/2016		The Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) finalizes a rule that prohibits U.S. banks from providing U.S. correspondent accounts to third-country banks to process transactions for North Korean financial institutions.





2017





Date	Event	
1/1/2017	In his annual New Year's speech, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un touts the advancement of the country's nuclear weapons and says the country is in the final stage of preparation to test an intercontinental ballistic missile. The speech also indicates a possible willingness to negotiate with South Korea. In response, President-elect Trump tweets, "North Korea just stated that it is in the final stages of developing a nuclear weapon capable of reaching parts of the U.S. It won't happen!"	
1/11/2017		The Treasury Department sanctions two North Korean government organizations, the State Planning Commission and the Ministry of Labor, as well as seven North Korean government and Workers' Party officials.
1/20/2017	Donald J. Trump is inaugurated as the 45 th President of the United States.	
1/31/2017	The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations holds a hearing, "Confronting the North Korea Threat: Reassessing Policy Options."	
2/10/2017	 	North Korea test launches a new solid-fueled medium-range ballistic missile, the Pukguksong-2 (or KN-15). The test occurs while President Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Abe are holding their first summit at Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort.
2/13/2017	Kim Jong-nam, the older half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, is assassinated with VX nerve agent by North Korean agents at the Kuala Lumpur airport Malaysia.	
3/1/2017	U. S. and South Korean militaries hold their annual Foal Eagle bilateral field training exercise.	
3/5/2017		North Korea tests four ER SCUD medium range ballistic missiles.
3/8/2017	U.S. and South Korean militaries hold their annual Key Resolve computer-simulated command post exercise.	
3/10/2017	South Korea's constitutional court upholds the impeachment of former President Park Geun-hye, removing her from office.	
3/17/2017	Speaking at a joint press conference with his counterpart, South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se, during his first trip to South Korea as Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson says: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "the policy of strategic patience has ended. We are exploring a new range of diplomatic, security, and economic measures." • "in terms of talking about any kind of a freeze [of North Korea's nuclear program], I think it's premature for that. But at this stage I'm not sure we would be willing to freeze, with the circumstances where they exist today, given that that would leave North Korea with significant capabilities that would represent a true threat." • "As to the suggestion from the Chinese Government that we should stand down our joint military operations in exchange for engaging in talks, we do not believe the conditions are right to engage in any talks at this time." 	
3/19/2017		North Korea conducts a test of its RD-250 liquid-fueled rocket engine.
3/21/2017	The House Committee on Foreign Affairs: Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific holds a hearing, "Pressuring North Korea: Evaluating Options."	
3/22/2017		North Korea tests a missile of unknown classification that U.S. Pacific Command says exploded seconds after launch.







Date	Event	
3/31/2017		The Treasury Department sanctions 1 North Korean entity and 11 North Korean individuals for conducting prohibited activities.
4/1/2017	Sometime in the late winter/early spring of 2017, Trump reportedly signs a broad directive to increase pressure against North Korea.	
4/4/2017		NK test launches an intermediate range ballistic missile (Hwasong-12) ahead of an April 6-7 summit between Presidents Trump and Xi.
4/6-4/7/2017		In their first summit meeting, at Mar-a-Lago, Presidents Trump and Xi agree to increase cooperation to convince North Korea to dismantle its nuclear and missile programs.
4/15/2017	During a parade to celebrate the 105 th anniversary of the birthday of North Korea founder Kim Il-sung, North Korea displays new ballistic missiles, including its ICBM and SLBMs.	
4/15/2017		North Korea test launches an intermediate range ballistic missile (Hwasong-12) on the anniversary of the birthday of former North Korean supreme leader, Kim Il-sung.
4/17/2017	U.S. and South Korean militaries hold their annual “Max Thunder” combined military exercise.	
4/26/2017	Secretary of State Tillerson, Secretary of Defense James Mattis, Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joe Dunford, brief all 100 members of the Senate at the White House on the Administration’s North Korea policy review. Separate briefings are held for House members in the Capitol building.	
4/26/2017	Secretary Tillerson, Secretary Mattis, and Director Coats issue a joint statement describing the results of the Administration’s review of its North Korea policy. The policy’s aim is “to pressure North Korea into dismantling its nuclear, ballistic missile, and proliferation programs by tightening economic sanctions and pursuing diplomatic measures with our Allies and regional partners” in order to “convince the regime to de-escalate and return to the path of dialogue.”	
4/28/2017	Secretary Tillerson addresses the U.N. Security Council on North Korea, saying “the threat of a North Korean nuclear attack on Seoul, or Tokyo, is real,” and that the U.N. member nations “must work together to adopt a new approach and impose increased diplomatic and economic pressures on the North Korean regime.”	
4/28/2017		North Korea test launches an intermediate range ballistic missile (Hwasong-12).
5/2/2017	The Department of Defense states that the THAAD missile defense system deployed in South Korea is operational.	
5/3/2017	In remarks to State Department employees, Secretary of State Tillerson discusses North Korea first in his list of policy priorities, describing it as the “greatest threat” the United States faces. He says “we’ve been ... leaning hard into China to test their willingness to use their influence, their engagement with the regime in North Korea” and says the maximum pressure campaign is “a pressure campaign that has a knob on it. I’d say we’re at about dial setting 5 or 6 right now.” Tillerson states what becomes known as the “4 Nos,” saying that United States policy “is not about regime change, this is not about regime collapse, this is not about an accelerated reunification of the peninsula, this is not about us looking for an excuse to come north of the 38 th Parallel.”	
5/5/2017		Trump signs Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (H.R. 244), which requires that: U.S. government funded broadcasts into North Korea not be reduced; assistance be given to North Korean refugees; and that a dataset on North Korean prisons and gulags be maintained.
5/9/2017	Moon Jae-in is elected president of South Korea.	





Date	Event	
5/10/2017	The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs: Subcommittee on National Security and International Trade and Finance holds a hearing, "Secondary Sanctions Against Chinese Institutions: Assessing Their Utility for Constraining North Korea."	
5/14/2017		North Korea test launches an intermediate range ballistic missile (Hwasong-12).
5/21/2017		North Korea test launches a medium range ballistic missile (Pukguksong-2).
5/28/2017		North Korea claims to successfully test the KN-06 (Pon'gae-5), a surface-to-air road-mobile guided missile defense system, and says it will be mass produced.
5/28/2017		North Korea test launches a short-range ballistic missile (KN-18) with Maneuverable Reentry Vehicle (MRV).
6/1/2017		The Treasury Department sanctions nine entities, and three individuals, including two Russia-based companies and three major North Korean governmental organizations: the State Affairs Commission (North Korea's supreme policy-making body ¹⁰), the Korean People's Army, and the Ministry of People's Armed Forces.
6/2/2017		The U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 2356, which imposes sanctions on 4 North Korean entities and 14 officials.
6/7/2017	President Moon suspends the completion of the deployment of the THAAD missile defense system pending an environmental impact study. Two of six launchers have been deployed.	
6/8/2017		North Korea tests four Kumsong-3 surface-to-ship cruise missiles.
6/22/2017		North Korea reportedly conducts a rocket engine test.




¹⁰ In June 2016, the State Affairs Commission replaced the National Defense Commission as North Korea's supreme policymaking organ.








Date	Event	
6/26/2017	<p>In a speech to the Institute for Corean-American Studies, National Intelligence Manager for East Asia Scott Bray says:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “We believe North Korea’s strategic objective is the development of a credible nuclear deterrent. Kim Jong Un is committed to development of a long range nuclear armed missile capable of posing a direct threat to the continental United States to complement his existing ability to threaten the region. Kim views nuclear weapons as a key component of regime survival and a deterrent against outside threats.” “Kim probably judges that once he can strike the U.S. mainland, he can deter attacks on his regime and perhaps coerce Washington into policy decisions that benefit Pyongyang and upset regional alliances—possibly even to attempt to press for the removal of U.S. forces from the peninsula.” “Recent demonstrations with new shorter range systems such as the new submarine and land launched ballistic missiles capable of threatening the Republic of Korea and Japan are concerning. North Korea’s recent missile testing and development. They demonstrate that with sufficient time, technology, and testing, North Korea can overcome design deficiencies or other malfunctions, increasing the threat these systems pose to the region and advancing Kim Jong Un’s goals against the continental United States.” 	
6/29/2017		The Treasury Department’s Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) announces a finding that the China-based Bank of Dandong is a “primary money laundering concern” and proposes severing the bank from the U.S. financial system. The Treasury Department sanctions two Chinese individuals and one Chinese company for engaging in prohibited commercial activities with North Korea.
6/29/2017		At their first summit with one another, in Washington, DC, Trump and Moon issue a joint statement that they share a goal of “complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula” and commit to “apply maximum pressure on the DPRK and compel Pyongyang to cease its provocative actions and return to sincere and constructive talks.” Trump and Moon say “the door to dialogue with the DPRK remains open under the right circumstances.” President Trump “support[s]” South Korea’s “leading role” in “fostering an environment for peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula,” and “express[es] support” for President Moon’s “aspiration to restart inter-Korean dialogue on issues, including humanitarian affairs.”
7/4/2017		North Korea flight tests an intercontinental ballistic missile (Hwasong-14) for the first time. A KCNA statement says the missile could deliver a “large-sized heavy” nuclear warhead.
7/4/2017	The Russian and Chinese foreign ministries issue a joint statement expressing support for the idea of a “double freeze”: “missile and nuclear activities by the DPRK and large-scale joint exercises by the United States and the Republic of Korea.”	
7/6/2017		Trump, Moon, and Abe meet on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Hamburg, Germany. They issue a joint statement condemning North Korea’s July 4 missile launch and commit to further strengthening cooperation to deter North Korea.
7/13/2017	President Moon gives a speech in Berlin laying out his strategy for engagement with North Korea.	
7/13/2017	Otto Warmbier, a U.S. college student, returns to the United States in a comatose state after a year and a half of imprisonment in North Korea. He dies a week later.	
7/21/2017	The State Department restricts U.S. citizens’ travel to North Korea “due to safety and security concerns.”	

Date	Event		
7/25/2017	The Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity holds a hearing, “Assessing the Maximum Pressure and Engagement Policy Toward North Korea,” consisting of two panels. On the first, Susan Thornton, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, testifies that the Administration is asking countries to go beyond U.N. sanctions by curtailing or ending trade with North Korea and by reducing North Korea’s diplomatic representation around the world. She says that North Korea establishing a nuclear and missile testing moratorium and diminishing its “provocative behavior” would be a “step in moving toward” bilateral negotiations.		
7/25/2017	The <i>Washington Post</i> reports that the Defense Intelligence Agency assesses North Korea could field a reliable nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missile as early as 2018. The article also quotes a statement from Office of the Director of National Intelligence’s manager for East Asia Scott Bray, saying that North Korea’s July 4 test was a “milestone” that was “not a surprise to the intelligence community.”		
7/28/2017		North Korea flight tests an inter-continental ballistic missile (Hwasong-14) for the second time.	
8/2/2017			Trump signs the Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA, H.R. 3364/P.L. 115-44), which establishes requirements and discretionary authorities for the President to impose sanctions on North Korea, Russia, and Iran.
8/5/2017		The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopts Resolution 2371, condemning the July ICBM missile test and expanding sanctions against North Korea. The resolution forbids purchase, sale, or transfer of North Korean coal, iron, iron ore, seafood, lead, and lead ore.	
8/7/2017	The North Korean official news agency responds to the expanded sanctions saying, “We will make the U.S. pay by a thousand-fold for all the heinous crimes it commits against the state and people of this country.”		
8/8/2017	Trump warns North Korea that they “will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen” if they make more threats against the United States.		
8/9/2017	A North Korean spokesman threatens U.S. military bases on Guam, saying its military is reexamining its operational plan for “making an enveloping fire at the areas around Guam with medium-to-long-range strategic ballistic rocket Hwasong-12.”		
8/11/2017	President Trump tweets, “Military solutions are now fully in place, locked and loaded, should North Korea act unwisely. Hopefully Kim Jong Un will find another path!”		
8/15/2017	<p>In his first annual address marking Korea’s 1945 liberation from Japanese rule, President Moon says:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “War must never break out again on the Korean Peninsula. Only the Republic of Korea can make the decision for military action on the Korean Peninsula. Without the consent of the Republic of Korea, no country can determine to take military action.”• “... we cannot rely only on our ally for our security. When it comes to matters related to the Korean Peninsula, our country has to take the initiative in resolving them.”• “The resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue has to start with a nuclear freeze. When the North at least stops additional nuclear testing and missile provocations, the conditions for dialogue can be created. The purpose of enhanced sanctions and pressure against the North is ... to bring it back to the negotiating table.”• “Let me make it clear: we do not want North Korea to collapse.”• “The upcoming PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games is a good opportunity for the two Koreas to take a step forward on the road to peace.”		
8/21/2017	The U.S. and South Korean militaries hold their annual combined Ulchi Freedom Guardian exercise.		

Date	Event	
8/22/2017		The Treasury Department sanctions 10 entities and 6 individuals from China and Russia for conducting prohibited activities with North Korea.
8/25/2017		North Korea test launches three short-range ballistic missiles with MRVs.
8/29/2017		North Korea test launches an intermediate range ballistic missile (Hwasong-12). In response, President Trump issues a statement saying “Threatening and destabilizing actions only increase the North Korean regime’s isolation in the region and among all nations of the world. All options are on the table.”
9/3/2017	North Korea state-run media releases photos claiming to show leader Kim Jong-un inspecting nuclear weapon devices capable of fitting on intercontinental ballistic missiles.	
9/3/2017		North Korea conducts its sixth nuclear test, with a seismic magnitude of 6.3. North Korea claims to have tested a hydrogen (thermonuclear) device that can be delivered by an intercontinental ballistic missile. Experts estimate a range of yields, up to 250 kilotons.
9/3/2017	President Trump tweets, “South Korea is finding, as I have told them, that their talk of appeasement with North Korea will not work, they only understand one thing!”	
9/3/2017	Secretary of Defense James Mattis issues a statement saying, “Any threat to the United States or its territory, including Guam, or our allies, will be met with a massive military response.... Kim Jong-un should take heed the United Nations Security Council’s unified voice—all members [of the U.N. Security Council] unanimously agreed on the threat North Korea poses and they remain unanimous in their commitment to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula—because we are not looking to the total annihilation of ... North Korea, but as I said we have many options to do so.”	
9/4/2017	South Korea announces it will deploy the four remaining THAAD launchers.	
9/4/2017	In a phone call with President Moon, President Trump agrees to South Korea’s request to lift restrictions on Seoul’s missile payload limits.	
9/11/2017		The U.N. Security Council passes resolution 2375, which imposes additional sanctions on North Korea.
9/12/2017	The House Foreign Affairs Committee holds a hearing, “Sanctions, Diplomacy, and Information: Pressuring North Korea.”	
9/13/2017	The House Committee on Financial Services: Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade holds a hearing, “A Legislative Proposal To Impede North Korea’s Access to Finance.”	
9/14/2017		North Korea flight tests a Hwasong-12 intermediate range ballistic missile.
9/15/2017	Russia-based Bank Sputnik suspends transactions with North Korea. The bank was the only channel in which U.N. agencies were able to obtain North Korean currency for humanitarian purposes in the nation in years prior.	
9/19/2017	In his first address to the U.N. General Assembly, President Trump criticizes North Korea’s human rights record and its development of weapons of mass destruction. He says, “The United States has great strength and patience, but if it is forced to defend itself or its allies, we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea. Rocket Man is on a suicide mission for himself and for his regime. The United States is ready, willing, and able, but hopefully this will not be necessary.... It is time for North Korea to realize that the denuclearization is its only acceptable future.”	



Date	Event	
9/21/2017		Trump, Moon, and Abe meet on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly meeting to discuss the North Korean situation.
9/21/2017		President Trump issues Executive Order 13810 imposing additional sanctions on North Korea, including authorizing the Secretary of the Treasury to designate for sanctions any foreign financial institution that conducts or facilitates “any significant transaction on behalf of any [designated] person,” or “in connection with trade with North Korea.”
9/21/2017		North Korea’s state-run media issues remarks from Kim Jong-un in response to President Trump’s U.N. speech two days prior. Among his points, Kim states the Trump’s speech “convinced me, rather than frightening or stopping me, that the path I chose is correct and that it is the one I have to follow to the last.... I will surely and definitely tame the mentally deranged U.S. dotard with fire.”
9/22/2017		Speaking in New York, North Korea Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho suggests that North Korea is considering testing a hydrogen bomb in the Pacific Ocean as a response to Trump’s U.N. speech.
9/23/2017		The Department of Defense states that Air Force B-1B Bombers and their F-15C escorts flew from Guam over international waters east of North Korea to send a “clear message” to North Korea.
9/24/2017		President Trump issues a proclamation revising his Administration’s travel ban. The proclamation adds North Korea to the list, barring all North Korean nationals’ entry, subject to certain waivers and exceptions.
9/25/2017		North Korea Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho tells reporters in New York that President Trump’s recent comments were “a declaration of war.”
9/26/2017		The Treasury Department sanctions designates eight North Korean banks and 26 North Korean nationals operating in China, Russia, Libya and the United Arab Emirates who act as representatives of North Korean banks.
9/28/2017		South Korean National Security Advisor Chung Eui-yong tells South Korean lawmakers that the United States will increase deployment of ‘strategic assets’ to the peninsula.
9/28/2017		The Senate Committee on Armed Services holds a closed session briefing to examine developments in North Korea.
9/28/2017		The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs holds a hearing, “Evaluating Sanctions Enforcement and Policy Options on North Korea: Administration Perspectives.”
9/30/2017		Secretary of State Tillerson meets with President Xi. Tillerson publicly states afterward that he is looking into possible high-level talks with North Korea and was already in direct communication with them.
10/1/2017		President Trump tweets, “I told Rex Tillerson ... that he is wasting his time trying to negotiate with Little Rocket Man....”
10/12/2017		The House Committee on Homeland Security’s Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency holds a hearing, “Empty Threat or Serious Danger: Assessing North Korea’s Risk to the Homeland.”
10/15/2017		North Korea renews its threat to Guam in advance of joint military exercises saying, “The US military action hardens our determination that the US should be tamed with fire and lets us take our hand closer to the ‘trigger’ for taking the toughest countermeasure.”
10/16/2017		The European Union Council agrees on new sanctions against North Korea, including expanding an investment ban in all sectors, imposing an oil export ban, and lowering the amount of personal remittances that could be sent to the country.
10/16/2017		U.S. and South Korean militaries hold 10-day joint naval exercises.


Date	Event	
10/26/2017		The State Department releases a congressionally mandated report entitled, “Report on Serious Human Rights Abuses or Censorship in North Korea.” In conjunction with the report and pursuant to Executive Orders 13687 and 13722, the Treasury Department sanctions seven North Korean individuals and three entities for human rights abuses.
10/29/2017		Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Dunford meets at Pacific Command headquarters with his South Korean and Japanese counterparts to focus on trilateral responses to North Korea’s “increasingly provocative actions.” The three parties agree to hold quarterly missile defense exercises in 2018.
10/31/2017		South Korea and China release a statement that they are putting aside their differences of opinion on the U.S. deployment of a THAAD missile defense battery in South Korea, ending months of strained relations between Seoul and Beijing. (Among other actions, China had closed down all China-based retail operations of the South Korean conglomerate Lotte, which had provided the land on which the battery was deployed.)
11/1/2017		In a speech to the National Assembly, President Moon says, “Our top priority is to maintain peace on the Korean Peninsula. No military action on the Korean Peninsula shall be taken without prior consent of the Republic of Korea.” He also says that “sanctions and pressure are the means to guide the North toward making the right choice and coming to the negotiating table.” Moon also proposes what he calls the largest increase in military spending since 2009, which the National Assembly approves later in November.
11/2/2017		The Financial Crimes Enforcement (FinCEN) Network at the Treasury Department bars the small Chinese Bank of Dandong from using the U.S. financial system over allegations it was illicitly helping North Korea, while also issuing a warning to other banks over possible similar actions in the future.
11/5- 11/14/2017		President Trump takes his first trip to East Asia as President, traveling to Japan, South Korea, China, Vietnam, and the Philippines, for bilateral and multilateral summits. He attends the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit (in Hanoi), as well as the U.S.-Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit and the East Asia Summit (both in Manila). The White House says that “strengthening international resolve to denuclearize North Korea” is the top goal of his trip.
11/6/2017		The United States, South Korea, and Australia conduct a joint military exercise to practice intercepting nuclear-related materials heading for North Korea. South Korea reportedly rejects proposals to include Japan in the exercises.
11/7/2017		During a 35-minute address to the South Korean National Assembly, the first such address by a U.S. President since 1993, President Trump says, “The world cannot tolerate the menace of a rogue regime that threatens with nuclear devastation. All responsible nations must join forces to isolate the brutal regime of North Korea—to deny it and any form—any form of it. You cannot support, you cannot supply, you cannot accept. We call on every nation, including China and Russia, to fully implement U.N. Security Council resolutions, downgrade diplomatic relations with the regime, and sever all ties of trade and technology.” Addressing Kim Jong-un directly, Trump says “... we will offer a path to a much better future. It begins with an end to the aggression of your regime, a stop to your development of ballistic missiles, and complete, verifiable, and total denuclearization.”
11/7/2017		The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations holds a closed briefing to examine North Korea’s cyber capabilities and U.S. policy response.
11/11/2017		U.S. and South Korean forces conduct a four-day naval exercise, including three U.S. aircraft carriers. Media reports say South Korea rejects proposals to include Japan in the exercises.
11/20/2017		The United States designates North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism. The country had previously been on the list from 1988 to 2008.





Date	Event	
11/21/2017		The Treasury Department sanctions 13 entities (including 4 based in China), 20 vessels and one Chinese individual for operating in the North Korean transportation industry, engaging in a “significant” trade to or from North Korea, and/or involvement in exporting workers from North Korea.
11/28/2017		North Korea flight tests an inter-continental ballistic missile (Hwasong-15). A North Korean statement says the missile can be equipped with a “super-large heavy warhead which is capable of striking the whole mainland of the U.S.”
11/30/2017	The House Committee on Financial Services’ Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade holds a hearing, “Evaluating the Effectiveness of U.S. Sanctions Programs.”	
12/4/2017	U.S. and South Korean militaries hold joint winter military exercises. They include a large five-day joint air exercise, “Vigilant Ace,” involving 230 aircraft.	
12/5/2017	U.N. Undersecretary for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman visits North Korea and meets with officials including North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho.	
12/12/2017		President Trump signs the FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) (H.R. 2810/P.L. 115-91). The act contains multiple provisions related to North Korea, as well as regional allies.
12/13/2017		President Moon and President Xi hold a summit, agreeing to “four principles to secure peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula”: 1. “war on the Korean Peninsula can never be tolerated”; 2. “the principle of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula will be firmly maintained”; 3. “all issues, including the denuclearization of North Korea, will be peacefully resolved through dialogue and negotiations”; and 4. “improvement in inter-Korean relations will be ultimately helpful in resolving issues involving the Korean Peninsula.”
12/13/2017	During a question-and-answer session at the Atlantic Council, Secretary of State Tillerson says, “We’re ready to talk anytime North Korea would like to talk. We’re ready to have the first meeting without precondition. Let’s just meet and see—we can talk about the weather if you want.” Following Tillerson’s comments, White House spokesperson Sarah Sanders reportedly says, “The President’s views on North Korea have not changed.”	
12/15/2017	Secretary of State Tillerson tells the U.N. Security Council: “A sustained cessation of North Korea’s threatening behavior must occur before talks can begin.”	
12/19/2017	President Moon says in an interview that he has asked the United States to postpone routine joint military exercises, citing the upcoming 2018 Olympics in PyeongChang, South Korea, and the desire for creating a better atmosphere for dialogue with North Korea.	
12/22/2017		The U.N. Security Council adopts Resolution 2397, tightening sanctions on North Korea including a tighter cap on North Korea’s refined petroleum imports and required repatriation of North Korean workers earning income abroad.
12/26/2017		Pursuant to Executive Order 13687, the Treasury Department sanctions two senior officials of the U.N. and United States-designated North Korean entity, the Munitions Industry Department (MID).
12/29/2017		The U.N. Security Council’s sanctions committee agrees to designate 4 of 10 cargo ships the United States had argued were violating sanctions against North Korea. The 6 vessels not sanctioned were owned or operated by Chinese companies.




2018




Date	Event
1/1/2018	In his annual New Year's Day speech, North Korea Leader Kim Jong-un says: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The entire US mainland is in our nuclear striking range, and ... a nuclear button is always on my office desk...." • "The nuclear weapons research and rocket industry sectors must mass produce nuclear warheads and ballistic rockets...." • "[W]e must ... alleviate the acute military tension between the North and the South and provide a peaceful environment on the Korean Peninsula.... The North and the South must broadly hold contacts, visits, cooperation, and exchanges between them, resolve each other's misunderstanding and distrust, and fulfill their responsibility and role as the main forces of reunification...." • "Speaking of the winter Olympic games to be held soon in South Korea, they are a good opportunity to demonstrate the nation's status and ... we are willing to take necessary measures, including sending a [North Korean] delegation...."
1/2/2018	President Trump tweets, "Will someone from [Kim Jong-un's] depleted and food starved regime please inform him that I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my Button works!"
1/2/2018	South Korea's Presidential Office welcomes Kim Jong-un's offer to talk about North Korea's participation in the PyeongChang Olympics and about improving inter-Korean relations.
1/3/2018	North and South Korea test a hotline that had not been used in about two years.
1/4/2018	In a phone call, President Trump and President Moon agree to postpone the annual joint "Foal Eagle" winter exercises "to de-conflict the Olympics and our military exercises so that United States and Republic of Korea forces can focus on ensuring the security of the Games."
1/9/2018	Meeting in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) at Panmunjom, North and South Korean representatives agree to have North Korea send a delegation to the 2018 Winter Olympics, and also to reopen bilateral military-to-military talks.
1/10/2018	In his annual New Year speech and press conference, President Moon states, "The ultimate goal of our diplomacy and national defense is to prevent a war from recurring on the Peninsula. I do not want the immediate unification of the Korean Peninsula.... My goal is to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue and solidify peace while I am in office.... If peace begins in PyeongChang, I will turn it into a stable system that takes root.... I stress once again; the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is a process toward peace and a goal at the same time." Moon expresses his willingness to meet with Kim Jong-un, gives credit to President Trump for helping bring North Korea back to the negotiating table, and acknowledges policy differences with the United States.
1/10/2018	President Trump and President Moon hold a phone call to discuss the January 9 meeting between the two Koreas.
1/15/2018	North and South Korea agree that a 140-member North Korean pop orchestra will perform during the winter Olympics.
1/16/2018	In Vancouver, Canada and the United States co-host a meeting of 18 countries, primarily comprised of the "sending states" that came to South Korea's assistance as part of the United Nations Command during the Korean War. Secretary of State Tillerson states: "The purpose of our meetings today is to improve the effectiveness of the maximum pressure campaign and combat North Korea's attempts to evade sanctions.... reject a 'freeze-for-freeze' approach in which legitimate defensive military exercises are placed on the same level of equivalency as the DPRK's unlawful actions...."
1/17/2018	The House Foreign Affairs Subcommittees on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade, and on Asia and the Pacific hold a joint hearing, "More Than a Nuclear Threat: North Korea's Chemical, Biological, and Conventional Weapons."


Date	Event	
1/17/2018	North and South Korea agree on cooperation during the PyeongChang Winter Olympics, including marching under a single flag.	
1/22/2018	Tokyo conducts a missile evacuation drill, its first in response to North Korea's expanding capabilities.	
1/24/2018		Pursuant to Executive Orders 13687 and 13810, the Treasury Department sanctions 9 entities, 16 individuals, and 6 vessels—including actors in China and Russia—for being “agents of the Kim regime financing or otherwise supporting North Korea’s WMD programs and other illicit businesses.”
1/29/2018	North Korea cancels a planned cultural event with South Korea ahead of the Olympics, citing “insulting” media from South Korea.	
1/30/2018	During the annual State of the Union address, President Trump states, “no regime has oppressed its own citizens more totally or brutally than the cruel dictatorship in North Korea. North Korea’s reckless pursuit of nuclear missiles could very soon threaten our homeland. We are waging a campaign of maximum pressure to prevent that from happening. Past experience has taught us that complacency and concessions only invite aggression and provocation.” Trump also discusses the cases of Otto Warmbier and Ji Seong-ho, a former North Korea citizen who escaped the country and who attends the State of the Union at the White House’s invitation.	
1/30/2018	U.S. Korea expert Victor Cha writes a <i>Washington Post</i> op-ed, “Giving North Korea a ‘Bloody Nose’ Carries a Huge Risk to Americans.” In late 2017 or early 2018, the White House reportedly dropped Cha from consideration as U.S. ambassador to South Korea after he shared with White House officials his views that the United States should not launch a preventive military strike against North Korea, favoring instead a policy of enhancing and sustaining the U.S. pressure campaign against North Korea.	
2/9/2018	The 2018 Winter Olympics open in PyeongChang, South Korea. Athletes from both North and South Korea march together in the opening ceremony under a ‘Unified Korea’ flag. The two nations also field a joint women’s hockey team. President Moon meets with Kim Yo-jong, the sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, during her visit to attend the opening ceremony Olympics. Moon is invited to North Korea. Vice President Mike Pence, visiting Seoul for the Olympics, does not interact with Kim Yo-jong despite sitting near her during the opening ceremony.	
2/15/2018	Acting Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific Susan Thornton states at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on State Department nominations that the United States does not have a “bloody nose” limited military strike strategy for North Korea.	
2/23/2018		In an effort “aimed at disrupting North Korean shipping and trading companies and vessels,” the Treasury Department sanctions targets one individual, 27 entities, and 28 vessels located, registered, or flagged in North Korea, China, Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Marshall Islands, Tanzania, Panama, and Comoros. The Department also issues a global shipping advisory “to alert persons of the significant sanctions risks to those continuing to enable shipments of goods to and from North Korea.”
2/25/2018	At the PyeongChang Olympics closing ceremony, President Moon shares a VIP box with Ivanka Trump, the daughter of President Trump, and North Korean General Kim Yong-chol. Trump reportedly does not interact with the North Koreans. Kim Yong-chol later meets with South Korean National Security Advisor Chung Eui-yong and reportedly conveys North Korea’s willingness to talk with the United States.	
2/27/2018	North Korea agrees to send a delegation and athletes to the Paralympic Games held in mid-March in PyeongChang.	
2/28/2018	Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton publishes an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal entitled, “The Legal Case for Striking North Korea First.”	





Date	Event
3/5/2018	Kim Jong-un meets in Pyongyang with a South Korean delegation, including National Security Advisor Chung Eui-yong and National Intelligence Service director Suh Hoon. The two sides agree to continue dialogue and hold a summit in April. North Korea also expresses an interest in talking with the United States about denuclearization and normalization, and says it will not conduct missile or nuclear tests while dialogue is ongoing.
3/8/2018	South Korean National Security Advisor Chung Eui-yong meets with President Trump at the White House. After the meeting, Chung announces that Trump has accepted an invitation to meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.
3/12/2018	U.N. Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Tomas Ojea Quintana, presents his findings and recommendations to the U.N. Human Rights Council, and "urge[s] the DPRK to consolidate the rapprochement [with South Korea] with a parallel opening to UN human rights monitoring."
3/19/2018	U.S. National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster, South Korean National Security Advisor Chung Eui-yong, and Japanese Secretary General of the National Security Secretariat Shotaro Yachi meet in San Francisco to discuss North Korea.
3/25/2018	North Korean leader Kim Jong-un meets with President Xi in Beijing, their first meeting and Kim's first trip outside of North Korea since taking power in 2011.
3/31/2018	CIA Director Mike Pompeo visits North Korea and meets with Kim Jong-un.
4/1/2018	The United States and South Korea hold their annual Key Resolve and Foal Eagle exercise, which had been postponed to avoid overlapping with the PyeongChang Winter Olympics.
4/1/2018	South Korea K-pop performers hold a concert in Pyongyang attended by Kim Jong-un.
4/11/2018	The House Foreign Affairs Committee's Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific holds a hearing, "North Korea's Diplomatic Gambit: Will History Repeat Itself?"
4/12/2018	During his confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Secretary of State nominee Mike Pompeo says the main purpose of a future meeting between President Trump and Kim Jong-un would be to "to develop an agreement with the North Korean leadership such that the North Korean leadership will step away from its efforts to hold America at risk with nuclear weapons, completely and verifiably."
4/14/2018	In a symbol of the restoration of China-North Korea ties, Song Tao, head of the International Department of the Communist Party of the China, travels to Pyongyang and meets with Kim Jong-un.
4/20/2018	The Koreas test a new telephone hotline that will allow the leaders of the two countries to directly connect.
4/20/2018	At the Third Plenary Meeting of the Seventh Central Committee of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea, Kim Jong-un declares "victory" in developing nuclear weapons, ICBMs, and the ability to mount nuclear warheads on ballistic missiles. Accordingly, Kim says, "... no nuclear test and intermediate-range and inter-continental ballistic rocket test-fire are necessary for the DPRK now..." and North Korea's "northern nuclear test ground" (Pyunggye-ri) will be dismantled. Because the country had successfully advanced its nuclear force, its new "strategic line" will "concentrate all efforts of the whole party and country on the socialist economic construction."
4/27/2018	 <p>President Moon and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un hold their first summit, at the 'Peace House' at Panmunjom on the southern side of the border of the two nations. It is the first inter-Korean summit since 2007 and the first to occur in South Korean territory. The two leaders issue the Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Unification of the Korean Peninsula, in which they: say they share a "common goal of realizing, through complete denuclearization, a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula;" agree to work to issue a declaration that the Korean War has ended; agree to regularize inter-Korean contacts and open a liaison office near the North Korean city of Kaesong; promise to negotiate military tension-reducing measures; and pledge to fully implement previous inter-Korean agreements.</p>




Date	Event	
4/29/2018	In an interview on CBS' <i>Face the Nation</i> , National Security Advisor John Bolton says, "[I]t's up to the North Koreans to show us that they really do intend to give up nuclear weapons" before the United States makes concessions. "I think we're looking at the Libya model of 2003-2004."	
4/29/2018		North Korea indicates that it would start shutting down its nuclear test facility in Punggye-ri in May, as well as shift its clocks 30 minutes to match standard times with Seoul.
5/2/2018	North Korean leader Kim Jong-un meets with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Pyongyang.	
5/7/2018		North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Chinese President Xi hold their second summit, in Dalian, China. Kim reportedly tells Xi that denuclearization should be done in a step-by-step and synchronized way.
5/8/2018	Secretary of State Pompeo travels to North Korea to work on details for a summit between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. During the visit, North Korea releases three Americans detained in the country, Kim Dong-chul, Kim Sang-duk, and Kim Hak-song, to Pompeo.	
5/9/2018		In Tokyo, Prime Minister Abe and President Moon hold a summit. North Korea is a focus of the discussion. Their meeting is preceded by a trilateral summit between the two leaders and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang.
5/14/2018	U.S. and South Korean militaries hold their annual Max Thunder joint military exercise.	
5/16/2018	North Korea cancels scheduled talks with South Korea, citing the ongoing joint U.S.-South Korean Max Thunder military exercises.	
5/16/2018	North Korea's first Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Kim Kye-gwan threatens to cancel the scheduled U.S.-North Korean Summit, citing anger over comments from U.S. officials, including U.S. National Security Advisor John Bolton. Bolton had suggested that North Korea follow denuclearization in a manner similar to Libya.	
5/18/2018	The United States cancels a planned joint exercise with the South Korea involving B-52 bombers after South Korea reportedly asks not to participate, in order to help with diplomatic efforts with North Korea.	
5/21/2018	In an interview with <i>Fox News</i> , Vice President Pence says "[W]hat the president has made clear is that we need complete and verifiable and irreversible denuclearization, and there's opportunities and benefits for North Korea once we reach that point of no return...." In a reference to Muammar Qaddafi's overthrow and death, Pence says "[T]his will only end like the Libya Model ended if Kim Jong-un doesn't make a deal," which appears to be a reference to regime change in North Korea.	
5/22/2018		President Moon travels to Washington, DC, and meets with President Trump to discuss the upcoming U.S.-North Korea summit.
5/23/2018	Testifying before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Secretary of State Pompeo says, "Our posture will not change until we see credible steps taken towards the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.... [T]he model that we have laid forth [for North Korea] is a rapid denuclearization, total and complete, that won't be extended over time." When asked about Kim Jong-un's goals, Pompeo "made clear it was important to him that when that time came, when [real denuclearization] had been achieved, that he in return would receive economic help ... and that he wanted security assurances from the world, the end of the status that sits between the South and North Korea, with the eventual goal ... being a peace treaty." Pompeo adds, "We're not going to provide economic relief [to North Korea] until such time as we have an irreversible set of actions, not words, not commitments undertaken by the North Korean regime." Pompeo also says that he raised North Korea's human rights record with Kim and that they "will be part of the discussions as we move forward."	






Date	Event	
5/24/2018		North Korea destroys a test tunnel entrance at the Punggye-ri nuclear test site. A small group of international journalists are invited to watch the demolition from a distance.
5/24/2018	North Korean Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Choe Son-hui, referring to “impudent” comments from Vice President Pence, states “We will neither beg the U.S. for dialogue nor take the trouble to persuade them if they do not want to sit together with us,” and “Whether the U.S. will meet us at a meeting room or encounter us at nuclear-to-nuclear showdown is entirely dependent upon the decision and behavior of the United States.”	
5/24/2018	President Trump cancels the planned summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. In a letter, Trump tells Kim he is cancelling due to “tremendous anger and open hostility” displayed by Kim. He also writes that if Kim changes his mind to “please do not hesitate to call me or write.” Trump later says that the U.S. military is “ready if necessary.”	
5/25/2018	North Korean state-run media carries a statement by North Korean First Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kim Kye-gwan, saying that North Korea is open to face-to-face dialogue “at any time and in any way.” President Trump tweets, “Very good news to receive the warm and productive statement from North Korea.”	
5/25/2018	The South Korean National Security Council holds an emergency meeting regarding President Trump’s decision to cancel his summit with North Korea, after which President Moon states, “I feel perplexed and regretful by this decision.” A further statement released by the South Korean Presidential office says, “it’s important to make continued efforts to improve inter-Korean relations based on the April 27 Panmunjom Declaration, and such efforts would contribute to creating an opportunity for the improvement of the U.S.-North Korea relations and complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.”	
5/25/2018	Speaking to reporters about his recent cancellation of his summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, President Trump says “We’re going to see what happens. We’re talking to them right now. It could even be the 12 th .”	
5/26/2018		President Moon and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un hold a hastily arranged “snap summit” at Panmunjom in which the two leaders agree to continue high-level talks, military talks, and state their commitment to seeing a successful U.S.-North Korean summit. The inter-Korean summit appears to jump-start momentum for a Trump-Kim summit.
5/27/2018	A team of diplomats from the United States travels to North Korea to meet with counterparts to discuss reviving the leader summit.	
5/28/2018	The South Korean National Assembly fails to ratify the April 27 Panmunjom Agreement between the two Koreas due to opposition from conservative lawmakers.	
5/29/2018	U.S. media outlets report that a recent CIA assessment, later publicly confirmed in January 29, 2019, congressional testimony by Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats, states that North Korea does not intend to give up its nuclear weapons in the near future.	
5/29/2018		The <i>Wall Street Journal</i> reports that the Trump Administration has backed away from plans to unveil a new set of North Korea sanctions against nearly three dozen targets.
5/31/2018	Secretary of State Pompeo and North Korean General Kim Yong-chol meet in New York City to discuss reviving the summit between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.	
5/31/2018	North Korean leader Kim Jong-un and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov meet in Pyongyang. The visit represents the first such trip for a Russian Foreign minister in about a decade. Lavrov suggests during the trip that denuclearization cannot happen without the removal of sanctions.	
6/1/2018	After meeting with North Korean General Kim Yong-chol in the White House, President Trump announces he will meet with Kim Jong-un on June 12 in Singapore.	






Date	Event	
6/5/2018	The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations' Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy holds a hearing, "U.S. Policy Toward North Korea."	
6/7/2018		President Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meet in Washington, DC, to confer ahead of the upcoming Trump-Kim summit. In a joint press conference, President Trump says he told Abe he would raise with Kim the issue of locating and repatriating Japanese who were abducted by North Korean agents in the 1970s and 1980s. Abe emphasizes the need to continue enforcing UNSC sanctions.
6/11/2018	In a press conference in Singapore the day before the first Trump-Kim summit, Secretary of State Pompeo says "these discussions ... between Chairman Kim and President Trump will set the framework for the hard work that will follow.... The complete and verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is the only outcome that the United States will accept. Sanctions will remain until North Korea completely and verifiably eliminates its weapons of mass destruction programs. If diplomacy does not move in the right direction—and we are hopeful that it will continue to do so—those measures will increase."	
6/12/2018		<p>President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un meet in Singapore, the first-ever meeting between leaders of the two countries. Trump and Kim issue a brief joint statement that consists of four main points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The two sides "commit to establish" new bilateral relations; 2. The two sides agree to work to build "a lasting and stable peace regime"; 3. North Korea "commits to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula"; and 4. The two sides will work to recover the remains of thousands of U.S. troops unaccounted for during the Korean War. <p>Speaking at a press conference without Kim after the summit, Trump says:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S.-North Korea denuclearization negotiations would resume at an early date; • Kim pledged to destroy a "major missile engine testing site"; • While nuclear negotiations were ongoing, the United States would suspend annual U.S.-South Korea military exercises, which Trump called "war games" and "provocative." He said the move, which reportedly surprised South Korea and U.S. military commanders, would save "a tremendous amount of money." Trump also expressed a hope of eventually withdrawing the approximately 30,000 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea. <p>Neither the joint statement nor Trump's remarks include details about a timeframe or verification protocols for denuclearization, or a commitment by Kim to dismantle North Korea's ballistic missile program.</p>
6/13/2018	Upon returning to Washington, DC, President Trump tweets, "... everybody can now feel much safer than the day I took office. There is no longer a Nuclear Threat from North Korea ... North Korea has great potential for the future!"	
6/18/2018	The Department of Defense announces that it is suspending a major military exercise with South Korea, Ulchi Freedom Guardian.	
6/19/2018		Third Kim-Xi summit, in Beijing.
6/20/2018	The House Committee on Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific holds a hearing, "The Trump-Kim Summit: Outcomes and Oversight."	
6/22/2018	North Korean state-owned airline Air Koryo, which the United States designated as a sanctioned entity in 2016, adds two new regular routes between North Korea and China, bringing its total regular routes to China to four.	





Date	Event
6/27/2018	The website <i>38 North</i> releases Satellite imagery analysis suggesting North Korea is upgrading infrastructure at its Yongbyon nuclear facility.
7/1/2018	In a <i>Face the Nation</i> interview, National Security Advisor Bolton says, “We know exactly what the risks are of [North Korea] using negotiations to drag out the length of time they have to continue their nuclear chemical biological weapons programs and ballistic missiles. The President would like to see these discussions move promptly to get a resolution.” He adds, “we have developed a program ... about ... how to dismantle all of [North Korea’s] WMD and ballistic missile programs in a year if they have the strategic decision already made to do that and they’re cooperative....” He later includes biological and chemical weapons programs in his vision of dismantlement.
7/1/2018	The Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies releases satellite imagery analysis suggesting North Korea is expanding a major missile-production plant.
7/2/2018	A U.S. official, Ambassador Sung Kim, meets with North Korean officials, including Vice Foreign Minister Choi Sun-hee, along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the first face-to-face contact between the two countries since the Singapore Summit.
7/5/2018	Secretary of State Pompeo visits North Korea. Pompeo was scheduled to meet with Kim Jong-un, but instead has a meeting with North Korean General Kim Yong-chol. Pompeo says of the visit, “These are complicated issues but we made progress on almost all of the central issues.” A statement from the North Korean Foreign Ministry describes the visit as “regrettable” and the U.S. demands are “unilateral and gangster-like.”
7/12/2018	President Moon reportedly says that “North Korea is looking to build trust, and an end to hostile relations with the United States, a significant difference from past nuclear negotiations when it asked for economic concessions for dismantling its nuclear program.”
7/12/2018	North Korean representatives do not arrive at a scheduled meeting with United States officials in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to discuss return of remains of those who died in the Korean War.
7/13/2018	<i>The Diplomat</i> and the Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies publish reports based on open source imagery that identify a previously undisclosed uranium enrichment site, called “Kangson,” located outside of Pyongyang.
7/15/2018	U.S. and North Korean officials meet in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to discuss the repatriation of the remains of Americans who died during the Korean War.
7/18/2018	The Department of Defense announces the U.S. and South Korea are suspending their August joint Ulchi Freedom Guardian military exercises.
7/19/2018	Russia and China block a U.S. complaint to the U.N. Security Council that North Korea has exceeded sanction limits on the import of petroleum.
7/20/2018	 The North Korean Human Rights Reauthorization Act of 2017 (H.R. 2061) is enacted as P.L. 115-198. The act includes provisions related to dissemination of news and other information to North Korea, as well as providing grants for research on North Korea’s denial of human rights through 2022.
7/20/2018	Secretary of State Pompeo and U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley meet with the U.N. Security Council and discuss the enforcement of U.N. sanctions against North Korea. In a joint press conference, Pompeo says “Strict enforcement of sanctions is critical” to achieving the goal of North Korean denuclearization. He highlights North Korea’s sanctions-evasion activities, particularly its smuggling of petroleum via ship-to-ship transfers to evade U.N. caps on petroleum imports. Haley says China and Russia blocked a U.S. proposal to halt all further imports of petroleum.
7/22/2018	The Department of Defense announces the United States and South Korea are indefinitely suspending the joint Ulchi Freedom Guardian military exercises, along with several other joint exercises, to support negotiations with North Korea.





Date	Event	
7/23/2018		The Treasury Department publishes a North Korea supply chain advisory “to highlight the sanctions evasion tactics used by North Korea that could expose businesses—including manufacturers, buyers, and service providers—to sanctions compliance risks.”
7/25/2018	<p>Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Secretary of State Pompeo says that North Korea continues to produce fissile material. He also says:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Until North Korea eliminates its weapons of mass destruction, our sanctions and those of the United Nations will remain in effect”; • The Administration’s definition of denuclearization “goes from infrastructure of nuclear war heads, though chemical biological weapons systems”; and • The Administration’s goal is to achieve complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization by the end of President Trump’s first term, if not sooner. 	
7/27/2018	North Korea returns to the United States the remains of 55 Americans who died during the Korean War.	
8/3/2018		The Treasury Department sanctions a Russian bank for facilitating a “significant transaction” on behalf of the Russia-based chief representative of North Korea’s foreign exchange bank, Foreign Trade Bank (FTB), which had been sanctioned by the United States and the U.N. Security Council. The Treasury Department also sanctions the FTB’s Russia-based deputy representative.
8/4/2018	At the 51 st Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Foreign Ministers’ (ARF) Meeting, North Korean foreign minister Ri Yong-ho issues a statement criticizing the United States, arguing that rather than responding positively to North Korea’s “goodwill gestures,” such as its testing moratorium and explosion at the Punggye-ri nuclear test site, the United States “is raising its voice louder for maintaining the sanctions against the DPRK and showing the attitude to retreat even from declaring the end of war, a very basic and primary step for providing peace on the Korean Peninsula.”	
8/6/2018		The U.N. Security Council approves guidelines to aid sanctions exemptions for humanitarian causes.
8/11/2018	The United States and North Korea reportedly hold working level talks at the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).	
8/13/2018		President Trump signs the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2019 (H.R. 5515/P.L. 115-232). Section 1263 prohibits the President from using NDAA-authorized funds to reduce the number of active duty troops serving in South Korea below 22,000 unless the Secretary of Defense certifies that the reduction is in the U.S. national interest and “will not significantly undermine the security of United States allies in the region.” Section 1650 provides that it is the sense of Congress that any denuclearization or end-of-war agreement with North Korea will not supersede U.S. treaty obligations or security assurances with South Korea, Japan, or Australia.
8/13/2018	Following high-level inter-Korean talks, the two Koreas announce a third Moon-Kim summit will occur in Pyongyang in September.	
8/14/2018	A South Korean Ministry of Unification official reportedly says that South Korea has begun to supply electricity to the Kaesong Industrial Complex building, located inside North Korea, which will house the soon-to-open inter-Korean liaison office. The official says that the provision of electricity does not violate sanctions because it is for South Korean workers in the office, not for North Koreans.	

Date	Event	
8/15/2018	In his annual Liberation day speech, President Moon says, “Developments in inter-Korean relations are not the by-effects of progress in the relationship between the North and the United States. Rather, advancement in inter-Korean relations is the driving force behind denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.” He discusses the establishment of a “single economic community” between the two Koreas and proposes creating special inter-Korean unification economic zones and an East Asian Railroad Community that would include the six Northeast Asian countries and the United States.	
8/15/2018		The Treasury Department sanctions one Russian individual and three entities (from China, Russia, and Singapore) for facilitating illicit shipments on behalf of North Korea.
8/20/2018	The International Atomic Energy Agency releases a report stating that “continuation and further development of the DPRK’s nuclear programme and related statements by the DPRK are a cause for grave concern.”	
8/20/2018	83 elderly North Koreans and 88 elderly South Korean family members separated since the Korean War briefly reunite at the Mt. Kumgang resort in North Korea, the first set of reunions in three years and the 21 st since 2000.	
8/21/2019		The Treasury Department sanctions two Russia-based shipping companies and six vessels for their involvement in ship-to-ship transfers of oil to North Korea.
8/23/2018	Stephen Biegun is appointed as the State Department’s Special Representative for North Korea.	
8/24/2018	<p>In a series of tweets President Trump cancels a planned trip by Secretary of State Pompeo to North Korea, writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I have asked Secretary of State Pompeo not to go to North Korea, at this time, because I feel we are not making sufficient progress with respect to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.” • “Additionally, because of our much tougher Trading stance with China, I do not believe they are helping with the process of denuclearization as they once were (despite the UN Sanctions which are in place).” • “... Secretary Pompeo looks forward to going to North Korea in the near future, most likely after our Trading relationship with China is resolved. In the meantime I would like to send my warmest regards and respect to Chairman Kim. I look forward to seeing him soon!” 	
8/28/2018	Secretary of Defense Mattis states that there are no plans to suspend further U.S.-South Korea military exercises.	
8/29/2018	<p>In a series of tweets President Trump writes,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “STATEMENT FROM THE WHITE HOUSE President Donald J. Trump feels strongly that North Korea is under tremendous pressure from China because of our major trade disputes with the Chinese Government. At the same time, we also know that China is providing North Korea with considerable aid, including money, fuel, fertilizer and various other commodities. This is not helpful!” • “Nonetheless, the President believes that his relationship with Kim Jong-un is a very good and warm one, and there is no reason at this time to be spending large amounts of money on joint U.S.-South Korea war games. Besides, the President can instantly start the joint exercises again with South Korea, and Japan, if he so chooses. If he does, they will be far bigger than ever before.....” 	
9/1/2018	The United States extends the restrictions on U.S. citizens traveling to North Korea for another year.	
9/6/2018		The Treasury Department sanctions one entity and one individual in North Korea for multiple cyberattacks. The U.S. Department of Justice also unseals criminal charges against the same individual.

Date	Event		
9/7/2018	Generals from the United States and North Korea meet in Panmunjom to continue discussions over repatriating the remains of U.S. Korean War dead.		
9/9/2018	North Korea holds a military parade in celebration of the 70 th anniversary of its founding. Noticeably, no ICBMs are put on display. Chinese President Xi sends Politburo member Li Zhanshu as an envoy to attend the event in his place.		
9/10/2018	The White House acknowledges that it has received a letter from North Korean leader Kim Jong-un requesting a second summit.		
9/13/2018		The Treasury Department sanctions a China-based information technology company, its North Korean CEO, and its Russia-based sister company for exporting and utilizing workers from North Korea, and for operating in the North Korean IT industry.	
9/13/2018	The House Committee on Foreign Affairs holds a hearing, "Oversight of U.S. Sanctions Policy."		
9/13/2018	The Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission holds a hearing, "North Korea: Denuclearization Talks and Human Rights."		
9/14/2018	North and South Korea open a joint liaison office inside the Kaesong Industrial Complex.		
9/17/2018	Meeting with senior members of his administration before departing for Pyongyang, President Moon says that his "primary task is to address tension and possible armed conflict arising from a military standoff between the South and North as well as fears of war." Second, he will seek to "facilitate North Korea-United States dialogue for denuclearization.... For this reason, I intend to have a candid, frank conversation with Chairman Kim Jong-un about how to find common ground between the U.S. demand for denuclearization measures and the North's request for an end to hostile relations and reciprocal action for a security guarantee."		
9/18/2018			President Moon and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un meet for a third summit in Pyongyang and Mt. Paektu, North Korea. Moon and Kim sign the "Pyongyang Declaration" pledging denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, improvements in inter-Korean relations, and confidence-building measures to ease military tension. Kim promises to visit Seoul "at an early date," which would be the first trip to Seoul by a North Korean leader. The two sides also sign a Comprehensive Military Agreement in which they agree to reestablish communications links to prevent accidental military clashes, create a no-fly zone along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), withdraw many of their guard posts within the DMZ, and create in effect a "no military drills zone" and a joint fishing zone in the Yellow Sea. In the first direct speech by a South Korean president to a large North Korean audience, Moon gives a short address to a crowd of approximately 150,000 North Koreans attending a gymnastics performance.
9/19/2018	In a statement issued following the third Moon-Kim summit, Secretary of State Pompeo invites North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho to meet in New York City and another North Korean representative to meet with U.S. Special Representative for North Korea, Stephen Biegun, in Vienna, Austria.		
9/23/2018		President Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Abe have dinner together ahead of the U.N. General Assembly meeting.	
9/24/2018		President Trump and President Moon meet on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly meeting.	


Date	Event	
9/25/2018	In a speech in New York City, South Korean President Moon discusses the need to formally end the Korean war and improve economic cooperation between the Koreas, and to establish regional economic programs that include North Korea. He also says that the stationing of U.S. forces in South Korea “is simply a matter for the ROK-U.S. alliance to decide regardless of a declaration to end the Korean War or the signing of a peace treaty.”	
9/25/2018		Prime Minister Abe meets with President Moon on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly meeting.
9/26/2018		President Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Abe meet in New York.
9/26/2018	Secretary of State Pompeo and North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho meet on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly. Pompeo agrees to travel to North Korea to work towards a second summit at the invitation of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un.	
9/26/2018	The House Committee on Financial Services' Subcommittee on Monetary Policy and Trade holds a hearing, “Administration Goals for Major Sanctions Programs.”	
9/27/2018	Addressing the U.N. Security Council, Secretary of State Pompeo says sanctions against North Korea need to continue until the country has denuclearized. Russia and China call for sanctions to be eased to reward North Korea for the steps it has taken.	
9/29/2018	Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho says at the U.N. General Assembly “Without any trust in the United States, there will be no confidence in our national security, and under such circumstances there is no way we will unilaterally disarm ourselves first.”	
9/29/2018	At a political rally in West Virginia, President Trump says that he and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un “fell in love,” and that Kim writes him “beautiful letters.”	
10/4/2018		The Treasury Department designates a Turkish entity, SIA Falcon, as well as three individuals for violating North Korea sanctions.
10/7/2018	Secretary of State Pompeo and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un meet in Pyongyang and agree to a second Trump-Kim summit. Kim says he will allow inspections of the closed Punggye-ri nuclear test site. However, North Korea indicates it wants “corresponding” concessions for its efforts to denuclearize.	
10/7/2018		The Deputy Foreign Ministers of Russia, China, and North Korea meet in Moscow and issue a joint statement calling for a review of U.N. Security Council sanctions against North Korea because of “the important steps taken by the DPRK in the direction of denuclearization.” The statement also says the United States and North Korea should establish trust through a process that is “phased and synchronous in nature and accompanied by reciprocal steps by the states involved.”
10/10/2018		During a parliamentary audit, South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha says that the Moon government is reviewing whether to lift sanctions imposed on North Korea in 2010 following the attack on a South Korean warship, the <i>Cheonan</i> . Later, she reportedly says the government has yet to start a “full-fledged” review of the sanctions. When asked about South Korea possibly lifting its sanctions, President Trump says, “Well, they won’t do it without our approval. They do nothing without our approval.” Kang also says Secretary of State Pompeo expressed displeasure over the September inter-Korean comprehensive military agreement.
10/11/2018	The Trump Administration is reported to be preventing U.S. aid workers from making humanitarian trips to North Korea.	

Date	Event	
10/13-10/21/2018	President Moon makes a nine-day, five-country tour of Europe to build support for his North Korea policies.	
10/15/2018	North and South Korea agree to begin work to connect infrastructure, including railway and roads.	
10/16/2018		The U.N. Security Council designates three vessels for deflagging in order to conduct ship-to-ship transfers to evade North Korean sanctions.
10/19/2018	Secretary of Defense James Mattis and South Korea's Minister of National Defense Jeong Kyeong-doo agree to suspend the planned joint Vigilant Ace military exercise scheduled for December. The Department of Defense states that the action will "give the diplomatic process every opportunity to continue."	
10/22/2018	Following a meeting among military officers from the Koreas and the U.N. Command, South Korea announces that the two Koreas have removed landmines around the Joint Security Area (JSA) in Panmunjom as part of their September military agreement.	
10/22/2018		A South Korean opposition National Assemblyman releases excerpts of a South Korean Financial Services Committee document showing that Treasury Department's Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence in September 2018 called executives in charge of compliance at seven South Korean banks to express "concern" about rumored financial cooperation between the two Koreas, and to issue reminders about U.N. and U.S. sanctions.
10/25/2018		Japanese Prime Minister Abe and Chinese President Xi hold a summit in Beijing, the first such visit by a Japanese leader in nearly seven years.
10/25/2018	CBS News reports that new rules implemented by the Trump Administration restrict who in Congress is allowed access to intelligence reports on North Korea's nuclear weapons program.	
10/25/2018		The Treasury Department sanctions two entities and one individual, all based in Singapore, for money laundering on behalf of North Korea. The Justice Department also unseals criminal charges against the Singaporean individual.
10/25/2018	South Korea announces that, in accordance with the September 2018 Comprehensive Military Agreement, the two Koreas and the U.N. Command have finished removing firearms and weapons from Joint Security Area in Panmunjom along the border of the Koreas.	
10/30/2018	The United States and South Korea agree to start a North Korea policy working group to strengthen bilateral coordination.	
11/1/2018	North and South Korea complete activity to remove firearms and guard posts around the Joint Security Area as part of their September military agreement.	
11/2/2018	North Korea's Foreign Ministry releases a statement saying that Pyongyang may resume building up its nuclear forces "if the U.S. keeps behaving arrogant without showing any change in its stand [that it will not ease sanctions]."	
11/7/2018	A meeting scheduled between Secretary of State Pompeo and North Korean General Kim Yong-chol in New York is postponed.	
11/12/2018	A report by the Washington, DC-based think tank Center for Strategic and International Studies says that North Korea is continuing to expand missile bases.	
11/15/2018	Vice President Pence states in separate interviews that a second summit between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un will be held in 2019 and that a list of nuclear weapons and missile sites from North Korea will not be a precondition for that summit.	
11/16/2018	North Korean state-run media reports that North Korean leader Kim Jong-un oversaw the testing of a "newly developed ultramodern tactical weapon."	




Date	Event	
11/17/2018	President Moon and President Xi meet on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting in Papua New Guinea. Xi says he is planning to visit North Korea in 2019.	
11/19/2018		The Treasury Department sanctions a South African national for helping North Korea import oil.
11/21/2018	Secretary of Defense James Mattis states that the United States and South Korea will scale back the planned large-scale spring Foal Eagle military exercise, to keep it from impeding diplomatic efforts.	
11/24/2018		The U.N. Security Council grants a sanctions waiver to allow the Koreas to work together on connecting their railroads after the United States reverses its opposition to the waiver.
12/5/2018	South Korea media reports that U.S. and North Korean officials met on December 3 at Panmunjom.	
12/6/2018	North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yongho meets with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Beijing and makes a courtesy call on President Xi.	
12/6/2018	The Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies reports that North Korea is working on expanding the Yeongjeo-dong long-range missile base and "has significantly expanded a nearby facility that appears to be another missile base."	
12/10/2018		The Treasury Department issues sanctions on three senior North Korean officials for human rights abuses and censorship. The sanctions coincide with a congressionally mandated report on human rights released by the State Department the same day.
12/12/2018	Vice President Pence travels to Japan and meets with Prime Minister Abe.	
12/17/2018	The U.N. General Assembly passes a resolution for the 14 th year in a row condemning North Korea's human rights record.	
12/18/2018	Japan releases a new set of National Defense Program Guidelines. They note that "military developments of North Korea pose grave and imminent threats to Japan's security and significantly undermine peace and security of the region and the international community."	
12/19/2018	In response to complaints from non-government aid organizations and others, Special Representative for North Korea Biegun announces that the State Department will review U.S. policy on private humanitarian assistance to North Korea.	
12/20/2018	North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency suggests that the country will not denuclearize until the United States removes "all nuclear threats, not only from North and South Korean territory, but also from the surrounding area aimed at the Korean Peninsula."	
12/22/2018	Vice President Pence reportedly cancels a planned speech discussing North Korean human rights issues.	
12/26/2018	North and South Korea hold a groundbreaking ceremony for a project to link their railways and roads.	
12/31/2018		<p>President Trump signs the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA) of 2018 (S. 2736/P.L. 115-409). The act provides a broad statement of U.S. policy for the Indo-Pacific region and appears to seek to reassure U.S. allies, strategic partners, and other nations of the United States' continued commitment to the region. Section 210 states that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> it is U.S. policy to continue to impose sanctions on North Korea. If North Korea-related sanctions are terminated on an entity, the act requires the executive branch to submit a report to Congress justifying the termination. it is U.S. policy that the objective of nuclear and missile negotiations with North Korea is "the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of such [nuclear and ballistic missile] programs."





Date	Event
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> it is the sense of Congress that the United States should advocate that North Korea be expelled from all international organizations until North Korea meets the requirements imposed by U.N. Security Council resolutions. <p>President Trump issues an accompanying “signing statement,” noting his potential constitutional objections to that several of ARIA’s provisions, including Section 210.</p>







2019





Date	Event
1/1/2019	The five-year United States-South Korea Special Measures Agreement (SMA), which divides the non-personnel costs of the U.S. military presence in the country, expires after negotiators are unable to reach agreement.
1/1/2019	<p>North Korean leader Kim Jong-un delivers his annual New Year’s Day speech. Instead of addressing a crowd, he delivers the speech sitting in an office. With regard to the United States, he says:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is “my firm will to establish a new bilateral relationship ... build a lasting and durable peace regime and advance towards complete denuclearization.... Accordingly, we declared at home and abroad that we would neither make and test nuclear weapons any longer nor use and proliferate them, and we have taken various practical measures. If the U.S. responds to our proactive, prior efforts with trustworthy measures and corresponding practical actions, bilateral relations will develop wonderfully at a fast pace through the process of taking more definite and epochal measures.” “... But if the United States persists in imposing sanctions and pressure against our Republic, we may be compelled to find a new way for defending the sovereignty of the country....” <p>Speaking of inter-Korean relations, Kim says that the two countries “entered into a completely new stage” in 2018 by effectively committing to a “nonaggression declaration.” He calls for replacing the Korean War ceasefire with a “peace mechanism” and says “we maintain that the joint military exercises with foreign forces, which constitute the source of aggravating the situation on the Korean peninsula, should no longer be permitted and the introduction of war equipment including strategic assets from outside should completely be suspended.”</p> <p>Kim also speaks of developing North Korea’s atomic power as a way of easing the country’s electricity shortages.</p>
1/8/2019	 <p>The 4th summit between Kim and Xi Jinping is held in Beijing.</p>
1/10/2019	<p>In his annual New Year’s press conference, President Moon says:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “any rapid solution [to the North Korean nuclear situation] will require that NK should take substantive actions in a bolder manner and when NK actually does that, the US corresponding measures should follow in order to ... encourage and facilitate NK’s continued denuclearization. I believe this will be the most important agenda at the second US-NK summit.” “The Kaesong Industrial Complex and tourism in Kumgang Mountain were beneficial to both South and North Korea.... [T]he prerequisites for the two Koreas resuming operation of the Complex and Mt. Kumgang tourism have essentially been met already. My Administration will cooperate with the international community ... to resolve the remaining issues such as international sanctions as soon as possible.”






Date	Event
1/11/2019	The State Department reportedly tells U.S. aid Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) that it will ease: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the granting of special permission for American citizens seeking to travel to North Korea to conduct humanitarian work; and the granting of special U.N. licenses for humanitarian exemptions requests to facilitate shipments of aid to North Korea.
1/15/2019	In its biennial white paper, the South Korean Ministry of National Defense deletes descriptions of North Korea's government and military as an "enemy."
1/17/2019	The Department of Defense releases the 2019 Missile Defense Review. It outlines North Korean missile developments aimed at reaching the United States.
1/18/2019	The White House announces that a 2 nd Trump-Kim summit will be held in February 2019, at a location to be announced at a later date. The announcement follows President Trump's meeting in the White House with North Korean General Kim Yong-chol.
1/19/2019	Representatives from the United States, North Korea, and South Korea, including U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun and North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Choe-son Hui, meet in Sweden to discuss a second Trump-Kim summit.
1/21/2019	The Washington, DC-based think tank Center for Strategic and International Studies issues a report with satellite evidence that North Korea has as many as 20 undisclosed missile sites.
1/28/2019	In a policy speech to the Japanese Diet, Japanese Prime Minister Abe raises the idea of meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in person.
1/29/2019	In its Worldwide Threat Assessment, presented to the Senate Select Committee on National Intelligence by Director of National Intelligence Daniel Coats, the Intelligence Community writes that although North Korea over the past year has taken steps to reversibly dismantle parts of its weapons of mass destruction infrastructure, "[W]e continue to assess that North Korea is unlikely to give up all of its nuclear weapons and production capabilities, even as it seeks to negotiate partial denuclearization steps to obtain key US and international concessions. North Korean leaders view nuclear arms as critical to regime survival."
1/31/2019	In a speech at Stanford University, U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Biegun says: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "we are prepared to pursue—simultaneously and in parallel—all of the commitments our two leaders made in their joint statement at Singapore last summer"; "Chairman Kim qualified next steps on North Korea's plutonium and uranium enrichment facilities upon the United States taking corresponding measures. Exactly what these measures are are a matter I plan to discuss with my North Korean counterpart during our next set of meetings. From our side, we are prepared to discuss many actions that could help build trust between our two countries and advance further progress in parallel on the Singapore summit objectives of transforming relations, establishing a permanent peace regime on the peninsula, and complete denuclearization"; "We expect to hold working-level negotiations with our North Korean counterparts in advance of the summit, with the intention of achieving ... a roadmap of negotiations and declarations going forward, and a shared understanding of the desired outcomes of our joint efforts"; and It is accurate to say "... we will not lift sanctions until denuclearization is complete," but "We didn't say we won't do anything until you do everything...."
2/5/2019	During his State of the Union address, President Trump announces that his second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has been scheduled for February 27-28 in Vietnam.
2/8/2019	Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun meets with North Korean official Kim Hyok-chol in North Korea.





Date	Event	
2/10/2019		The United States and South Korea sign a preliminary one-year Special Measures Agreement in which the South Korean government agrees to increase the payment it provides to offset the costs of the U.S. presence in the nation by 8.2%, the same percentage as the South Korea's total defense budget increase. The United States had reportedly demanded South Korea double its payment.
2/22/2019	The North Korean Embassy in Spain, where General Kim Hyok-chol served as ambassador until he was expelled in September 2017, is reported to have been attacked by a group of men. The North Koreans in the embassy were tied up and interrogated, and items were taken, before the attackers fled. Media reports later suggest the attackers might have been connected with the North Korean dissident organization "Cheollima Civil Defense."	
2/26/2019	The House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific and Nonproliferation holds a hearing, "On the Eve of the Summit: Options for U.S. Diplomacy on North Korea."	
2/27-2/28/2019		The 2 nd Trump-Kim Jong-un summit in Hanoi is held and ends without an agreement due to disagreements about the timing and sequencing of concessions, specifically North Korean denuclearization measures in exchange for sanctions relief. Both sides generally say they expect dialogue to resume.
3/1/2019	In a speech marking the 100 th anniversary of Korea's "March 1 st Movement" protesting Imperial Japan's Occupation, President Moon speaks about creating with North Korea a "new Korean Peninsula regime" of peace and economic cooperation.	
3/4/2019	U.S. and South Korean militaries hold a joint exercise called Dong Maeng, or Alliance. The exercise is seen as a replacement for the annual Foal Eagle and Key Resolve exercises.	
3/4/2019	IAEA Director-General Yukiya Amano tells the organization's board of directors that based on open source information and satellite imagery of Yongbyon, the Agency has observed no indications of reprocessing activities in the Radiochemical Laboratory, but saw indications of "ongoing construction work" at North Korea's Light Water Reactor and "indications of the ongoing use" of North Korea's reported centrifuge enrichment facility.	
3/4/2019	At the first meeting of his National Security Council in 2019, President Moon urges the attending officials to "push ahead, in a speedy manner, with inter-Korean cooperation projects agreed to in the Panmunjeon Declaration and the Pyeongyang Joint Declaration" so long as they occur "within the boundaries of international sanctions." He also says that the Hanoi Summit over time "could be part of a process that leads to a greater agreement." As part of this process, Moon mentions United States-North Korea discussions in Hanoi about the complete dismantlement of the Yongbyon nuclear complex, the partial removal of economic sanctions, and the establishment of a U.S. liaison office in North Korea.	
3/5/2019	The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations holds a closed briefing, "North Korea Denuclearization Efforts."	
3/15/2019	North Korea Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui threatens to suspend negotiations with the Trump Administration, blaming Secretary of State Pompeo and National Security Advisor John Bolton for creating an "atmosphere of hostility and mistrust" that led to the failed summit between President Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in February.	
3/21/2019		The Treasury Department imposes new sanctions on two Chinese shipping companies related to North Korea. The following day, President Trump tweets, "It was announced today by the U.S. Treasury that additional large scale Sanctions would be added to those already existing Sanctions on North Korea. I have today ordered the withdrawal of those additional Sanctions!" White House press secretary Sarah Sanders says in regard to the decision, "President Trump likes Chairman Kim, and he doesn't think these sanctions will be necessary."
3/22/2019	North Korea withdraws staff from the inter-Korean liaison office in the Kaesong Industrial Complex near the demilitarized zone.	

Date	Event	
3/26/2019	The Senate Committee on Foreign Relations' Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy holds a hearing, "U.S. Policy Toward North Korea."	
3/27/2019	The House Committee on Armed Services holds a hearing, "National Security Challenges and U.S. Military Activities in the Indo-Pacific."	
4/10/2019	When asked at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing whether he agrees that no sanctions should be lifted before North Korea demonstrates a commitment to complete verifiable, irreversible denuclearization, Secretary Pompeo says "the core U.N. security council resolutions need to remain in place until the verification of denuclearization has been completed," but also says "I want to leave a little space there. From time to time there are particular provisions" that could be relaxed "if we were making substantial progress...."	
4/11/2019	Meeting with President Moon in Washington, DC, President Trump indicates he is open to a third summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un. Asked whether he would accept a smaller deal with North Korea, Trump replies, "There are various smaller deals that maybe could happen.... You can work out, step by step, pieces. But, at this moment, we're talking about the big deal. The big deal is we have to get rid of the nuclear weapons." Asked whether he supports Moon's push for economic concessions, including reopening the Kaesong Industrial Complex, Trump says, "Well, at the right time, I would have great support. This isn't the right time."	
4/12/2019	In a speech before North Korea's Supreme People's Assembly, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un says North Korea "will be patient and wait till the end of this year to see whether the United States makes a courageous decision or not" to relax its demands on North Korea. He criticizes the United States for "resorting to all conceivable schemes in trying to prolong the economic sanctions" but praises his relationship with President Trump and says he "would be willing to try one more time" meeting with Trump. Kim criticizes South Korea for relying upon the United States and attempting to "pose as a meddlesome 'mediator' and 'facilitator' as they busy themselves with foreign trips." He also criticizes U.S.-South Korean military exercises, "which were agreed before to be discontinued."	
4/18/2019	North Korea conducts a test launch of what it called a "tactical guided weapon." Acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan says it was not a ballistic missile.	
4/24/2019		North Korean leader Kim Jong-un meets with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Russian city of Vladivostok.
5/4/2019		North Korea test launches two solid-fueled short-range ballistic missiles (KN-23). This is the first ballistic missile test since November 2017.
5/9/2019		North Korea test launches two short-range ballistic missiles (KN-23).
5/25/2019	President Trump tweets, "North Korea fired off some small weapons, which disturbed some of my people, and others, but not me. I have confidence that Chairman Kim will keep his promise to me...."	
5/25/2019	National Security Advisor John Bolton says that North Korea ballistic missiles tests on May 4 and May 9 violated U.N. Security Council resolutions against the nation.	
6/20/2019		The fifth Xi-Kim summit is held in Pyongyang. It is Chinese President Xi's first visit to North Korea as Chinese leader.

Date	Event	
6/30/2019		During an approximately one hour Trump-Kim Jong-un meeting at Panmunjom, inside the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas, the two leaders agree to restart bilateral talks. Donald Trump becomes the first sitting U.S. President to set foot inside North Korea.
7/16/2019		North Korea's foreign ministry releases a statement condemning the upcoming Dong Maeng military drills between the United States and South Korea.
7/23/2019		Russia and China carry out a joint-air patrol in the Asia-Pacific region, entering South Korea's air defense identification zone (ADIZ). The Russian planes later fly over the South Korean-administered Dokdo/Takeshima island, which is also claimed by Japan. South Korea and Japan scramble fighter jets to intercept the Russian and Chinese planes, and the South Korean jets fire warning shots toward the Russian jets.
7/23/2019		North Korean state-run KCNA reports that Kim Jong-un inspects a new type of ballistic missile submarine under development at the Sinpo South shipyard.
7/25/2019		North Korea test launches two short-range ballistic missiles (KN-23).
7/31/2019		North Korea test launches two guided rockets from the KN-25, its new Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS).
8/1/2019		North Korea does not send a delegation to Bangkok for the annual Foreign Minister-level Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF) meeting.
8/1/2019		Asked to comment on North Korea's missile launches, President Trump replies, "We never made an agreement on that. I have no problem. We'll see what happens. But these are short-range missiles. They're very standard."
8/2/2019		North Korea test launches two guided rockets from the KN-25 multiple launch rocket system (MLRS).
8/5/2019		The U.S. and South Korean militaries begin their two-week Dong Maeng military exercises.
8/5/2019		In remarks to his senior secretaries regarding a deterioration in South Korea-Japan relations, President Moon mentions the formation of a "peace economy" between the two Koreas as a "fundamental solution" to South Korea overcoming Japan. "The Japanese economy holds advantages over the Korean economy in terms of the size of its economy and the domestic market. The realization of a peace economy through inter-Korean economic cooperation will allow us to immediately catch up with Japan's advantages."
8/6/2019		North Korea test launches two short-range ballistic missiles (KN-23).
8/6/2019		Yonhap News reports that Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has added citizens of foreign countries who have traveled to North Korea on or after March 1, 2011, to the list of individuals no longer be eligible for the U.S. Visa Waiver Program (VWP).
8/7/2019		Asked at a press briefing whether North Korea's missile launches are "dampening the environment for discussion with North Korea," Secretary of State Michael Pompeo replies, "no."
8/9/2019		North Korea test launches two short-range ballistic missiles (KN-24).
8/15/2019		Moon Jae-In delivers a speech at an event marking the 74 th anniversary of Korean independence from Japanese rule, pledging to lay the foundation for the two Koreas to jointly host the 2032 Summer Olympics and achieve reunification by 2045, the 100 th anniversary of Korean independence.

Date	Event	
8/15/2019		North Korea test launches two short-range ballistic missiles (KN-24).
8/21/2019	In an interview with the <i>Washington Examiner</i> , Secretary Pompeo says if North Korean leader Kim Jong-un does not go down the path of denuclearization, “we’ll continue to keep on the sanctions that are the toughest in all of history and continue to work towards convincing Chairman Kim and the North Korean leaders that the right thing to do is for them to denuclearize.” Describing Trump-Kim meetings, Pompeo says, “Sometimes, I know these things are characterized as failures, but the truth is each time, I think the two leaders have developed deeper understandings of how it is we might achieve [denuclearization].”	
8/22/2019	South Korea announces it will withdraw from the South Korea-Japan General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), which enables the two countries to share security-related intelligence.	
8/23/2019	Asked if North Korea’s missile tests are breaking Kim Jong-un’s promises to him, President Trump says, “No, I don’t think so.... Kim Jong-un has been, you know, pretty straight with me, I think.... He likes testing missiles. But we never restricted short-range missiles. We’ll see what happens. Many nations test those missiles....”	
8/23/2019	In a statement carried by North Korea’s state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho says, “We are prepared for both dialogue and confrontation.... If the U.S. attempts to stand against us with sanctions without abandoning its confrontational posture, it would be a miscalculation. If so, we will remain the U.S.’s biggest ‘threat’ for a long time....”	
8/23/2019		North Korea test launches two rockets from the KN-25 multiple launch rocket system (MLRS).
8/25/2019		During a joint appearance with Prime Minister Abe at the G-7 meeting in Biarritz, France, President Trump says “I’m not happy about” North Korea’s short-range missile tests. “But, again, he’s not in violation of an agreement. We speak. I received a very nice letter from him last week.... He was upset that South Korea was doing the ‘war games,’ as you call them. I don’t think they were necessary either, if you want to know the truth.... I think it’s a total waste of money.” Prime Minister Abe says “[O]ur position is very clear: That the launch of short-range ballistic missiles by North Korea clearly violates the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions....”
8/27/2019	Germany, France, and the U.K. release statements condemning North Korea’s missile launches, and urge North Korea to return to talks with the United States.	
8/30/2019		The Treasury Department designates two Taiwan-based individuals, two Taiwan-based entities, and one Hong Kong-based entity for violating U.S. sanctions against North Korea.
9/6/2019	In a speech at the University of Michigan, Special Representative Biegun says of North Korea’s denuclearization: “[I]f the international community fails in this undertaking, North Korea will not be the last state in East Asia to acquire nuclear weapons.” He continues, “If we are to succeed [in negotiations], North Korea must set aside its search for obstacles to negotiations and instead seek the opportunities for engagement while that opportunity lasts. We have made clear to North Korea that we are prepared to engage as soon as we hear from them. We are ready, but we cannot do this by ourselves.”	
9/8/2019	In an interview with George Stephanopolous, Secretary of State Pompeo says, “[W]e’re disappointed that [Kim Jong-un] is continuing to conduct these short-range tests,” and that “we are hopeful that in the coming days or perhaps weeks we’ll be back at the negotiating table with them [the North Koreans].... President Trump has made a commitment to their security and economic prosperity. We know that we can turn around that economy.”	


Date	Event	
9/9/2019		North Korea test launches two short-range ballistic missiles (KN-25). North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) claims that the test involved a "super-large multiple rocket launcher" system (MRLS) and that Kim Jong-un supervised the test launch.
9/10/2019	National Security Advisor John Bolton departs from his position in the Trump Administration.	
9/13/2019		The Department of Treasury designates three North Korean entities for cyber theft and hacking against government, military, and financial institutions.
9/16/2019	Asked if he would be willing to go to North Korea, President Trump says, "I don't think we're ready for that. I would do it sometime at—sometime at a later future. And depending on what happens, I'm sure he'll love coming to the United States also. But, no, I don't think it's ready for that. I think we have a ways to go yet...."	
9/25/2019		Asked during joint press appearance with South Korean President Moon on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly meeting what it would take for him to have a third summit with Kim Jong-un, President Trump says, "Well, we'll see.... I want to know what's going to be coming out of it. We can know a lot before the summit takes place...."
10/2/2019		North Korea test launches a new sea-launched ballistic missile (Pukguksong-3) from a submerged test stand barge.
10/5/2019	In Stockholm, U.S. and North Korean officials hold their first working-level talks since the February 2019 Hanoi summit. The 8+ hours of talks end without any breakthrough. North Korea's chief nuclear negotiator, Kim Myong-gil, says that "the United States had raised our expectations by hinting at a flexible approach, new ways, and creative solutions, but has come up with nothing, and it has greatly disappointed us and discouraged us from negotiating." The State Department disputes Kim's negative characterization of the talks, saying, "the U.S. brought creative ideas and had good discussions with its DPRK counterparts" and proposes that the two sides meet again in Stockholm in two weeks.	
10/21/2019	President Donald Trump states that there is "room for the U.S. and North Korea to make a deal" following the failed working-level talks in Stockholm.	
10/22/2019	In a visit to the shuttered inter-Korean Mount Kumgang tourism facility, North Korean leader Kim Jong-un condemns the project, which he says would be "better off being managed without South Korean involvement," and that it symbolized a degree of dependency with the South.	
10/26/2019	North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) releases a statement condemning South Korea for military provocations, taking issue with South Korea's statement that it would "regularly stage Hyonmu-series ballistic missile firing drills every year."	
10/31/2019		North Korea test launches two rockets from the KN-25 MLRS.
11/13/2019	A spokesperson for the State Affairs Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea releases a statement condemning joint military drills held by the United States and South Korea and declares such actions as a "breach" of the Singapore Joint Statement.	
11/14/2019	The U.N. General Assembly Committee on Human Rights approves a resolution condemning North Korea's human rights violations, and states that such violations could amount to crimes against humanity.	
11/17/2019	The United States and South Korea announce that the two countries will indefinitely postpone a scheduled joint air exercise, the Combined Flying Training Event, as "a gesture of goodwill" following criticism from North Korea.	






Date	Event	
11/28/2019		North Korea test launches two rockets from the KN-25 MLRS.
12/3/2019	North Korea's Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs in charge of U.S. Affairs, Ri Thae Song, says that the United States has failed to act "in response to the measures taken by the DPRK first." He adds, "The dialogue touted by the U.S. is, in essence, nothing but a foolish trick hatched to keep the DPRK bound to dialogue and use it in favor of the political situation and election in the U.S..... The DPRK has done its utmost with maximum perseverance not to backtrack from the important steps it has taken on its own initiative. What is left to be done now is the U.S. option and it is entirely up to the U.S. what Christmas gift it will select to get."	
12/7/2019		North Korea conducts a liquid-fueled missile engine test at the Sohae Satellite Launching Ground facility, claiming the test would "have an important effect on changing the strategic position of the DPRK."
12/8/2019	President Trump tweets, "Kim Jong Un is too smart and has far too much to lose, everything actually, if he acts in a hostile way. He signed a strong Denuclearization Agreement with me in Singapore.... North Korea, under the leadership of Kim Jong Un, has tremendous economic potential, but it must denuclearize as promised...."	
12/9/2019	For the second consecutive year, the Trump Administration declines to support the convening of a UNSC meeting to discuss North Korea's human rights record, a meeting that had been held annually from 2014-2017. Without U.S. support, the meeting does not take place.	
12/11/2019	The U.N. Security Council convenes to discuss North Korea's missile and engine testing activity.	
12/13/2019		North Korea's Academy of Defense Science announces a successful "critical test" at the Sohae Satellite Launching Ground Facility. The test is likely a liquid-fueled missile engine test, like the previous test on December 7.
12/16/2019	Asked by a reporter if he is concerned by North Korea's current activities, President Trump responds, "We're watching it. We'll see. I'd be disappointed if something would be in the works. And if it is, we'll take care of it...."	
12/16/2019		At the U.N. Security Council, China and Russia propose lifting sanctions "related to the livelihood of the civilian population" of North Korea, by, among other steps, terminating sanctions on DPRK exports seafood, textiles, statues, and workers, and by exempting inter-Korean road and rail projects from U.N. sanctions. The United States rejects the proposal as "premature."
12/17/2019	The Commander of Pacific Air Forces, Lt. Gen. Charles Brown Jr., states that North Korea's "Christmas gift" to the United States could possibly be the testing of a long-range ballistic missile.	
12/19/2019	The Senate confirms U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun as the next Deputy Secretary of State.	
12/20/2019	North Korea's Central Military Commission meets. State-run KCNA reports that the meeting is held to "bolster up the overall armed forces of the country" to deal with "the complicated internal and external situation" and the "fast-changing situation."	

Date	Event
12/28-12/31/2019	<p>Kim Jong-un presides over a ruling Workers Party of Korea's (WPK) Central Committee plenary meeting and, in lieu of his traditional New Year's speech, issues a report. In the report Kim announces a new "offensive for frontal breakthrough" to seize the initiative as North Korea endures an "arduous and prolonged struggle" caused by "hostile forces." Kim says, among other items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current U.S.-DPRK "stalemate" is due to the United States' failure to withdraw its "hostile policy toward the DPRK" and its policies "to completely strangle and stifle the DPRK" including the conduct of U.S.-ROK joint military drills "which its president personally promised to stop," shipping "ultra-modern warfare equipment" to South Korea, and continuing to impose sanctions on North Korea. • dSue to the U.S. posture, "there is no ground" for North Korea to continue to maintain its unilateral moratorium, a "commitment to which there is no opposite party." • "The world will witness a new strategic weapon to be possessed by the DPRK in the near future," implying a return to the country's <i>byungjin</i> line of simultaneously pursuing economic development and nuclear weapons by saying that "nothing has changed between the days when we maintained the line of simultaneously pushing forward the economic construction and the building of nuclear force." • The United States cannot be expected to lift sanctions, and that "if the U.S. persists in its hostile policy towards the DPRK, there will never be the denuclearization on the Korean peninsula and the DPRK will steadily develop necessary and prerequisite strategic weapons for the security of the state until the U.S. rolls back its hostile policy towards the DPRK and lasting and durable peace-keeping mechanism is built." <p>Kim's report emphasizes economic self-sufficiency and autarky, and—in contrast to his usual New Year's speeches—makes no mention of inter-Korean relations.</p>

2020

Date	Event
1/7/2020	In his annual New Year's address, President Moon says "[T]he need to find realistic ways to further advance inter-Korean cooperation has become all the more urgent...." He repeats his willingness "to meet time and again and constantly engage in dialogue," and reiterates his proposals to North Korea that the two Koreas cooperate in the area of the DMZ, jointly bid to host the 2032 Summer Olympics, begin sports exchanges, and identify "realistic ways to implement projects to reconnect inter-Korean railroads and roads...." Moon says that he will continue efforts to resume operation of the inter-Korean Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC) and Mt. Kumgang tourism complex, both located inside North Korea.
1/8/2020	Kim Jong-un's birthday. To mark the occasion, President Trump asks President Moon to convey his good wishes.
1/10/2020	South Korean Ministry of Unification Deputy Spokesperson Kim Eun-han says, "It is our consistent stance that sanctions against North Korea do not apply to independent tours," as long as "safety can be guaranteed." Kim also reportedly says that Kim said that the government is reviewing "diverse" ideas to facilitate more visits by South Korean citizens to North Korea.
1/13/2020	Speaking in San Francisco, Secretary of State Pompeo says that negotiating with North Korea has "been slow. It's been two steps forward and a step or two back." Speaking of China's role, Pompeo says, "The issue of North Korea is unlikely to be resolved without the Chinese Government also weighing in, making very clear to the North Korean leadership that it is also the Chinese expectation that North Korea will denuclearize."

Date	Event	
1/14/2020	In his annual New Year's press conference, President Moon says "We should no longer just wait for DPRK-U.S. dialogue. Amid the two countries' dialogue deadlock, South Korea should look for realistic ways to improve inter-Korea relations." He also says, "If exceptions from U.N. sanctions are necessary for South-North cooperation, I think we can make efforts for that." Moon says that independent inter-Korean tourism, as well as border-area and sports-related exchanges, would not be prohibited by existing international sanctions.	
1/14/2020	Speaking to reporters in Silicon Valley following a trilateral U.S.-South Korean-Japan foreign ministerial meeting and a U.S.-South Korea foreign ministerial meeting, South Korean Foreign Minister Kwang Kyung-wha reportedly says, "It is important to keep the momentum of engagement towards North Korea alive through inter-Korean dialogue in areas which the South and North can handle.... [T]here are also projects which, if there is a problem of sanctions, can be done through receiving sanctions exceptions."	
1/14/2020		Pursuant to Executive Order 13722, the Treasury Department sanctions a North Korean trading corporation and a China-based North Korean company for involvement in North Korea's practice of sending workers overseas.
1/15/2020	Speaking at a White House signing of a U.S.-China trade agreement, President Trump says, "China is helping us with North Korea.... [T]hey have been very, very helpful with respect to Kim Jong Un, who has great respect for President Xi."	
1/16/2020	U.S. Ambassador to South Korea Harry Harris reportedly says that that South Korean proposals to allow independent tourism to North Korea should be discussed in the U.S.-South Korean Working Group "to avoid a misunderstanding later that could trigger" U.S. or U.N. sanctions and to coordinate possible DMZ crossings with the U.N. Command.	
1/17/2020	Referring to U.S. Ambassador Harris' comments the previous day, a Blue House official reportedly says that although Seoul "always" closely consults with Washington, "it's very inappropriate for the ambassador to make such a mention for media over remarks by the president of the hosting nation." Regarding Harris' comments, a Unification Ministry spokesperson during a press briefing reportedly says "our policy with regard to North Korea belongs to our sovereignty."	
1/18/2020	NKNews reports that Ri Son Gwon, reported to be a hard-liner in relations with the United States and South Korea, has been elevated to North Korea's Foreign Minister, replacing Ri Yong Ho.	
1/24/2020	At a Washington, DC, event, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper says that North Korea has an "aggressive R&D program and a test program" and that "clearly, [North Korea is] trying to build a long-range ballistic missile with the ability to carry a nuclear warhead, if you will, on top of it." "When I came into office" in mid-2017, Esper continues, "we were on a path to war with North Korea. And the Army, everybody was preparing for a possible conflict. And I think the outreach by the President these last couple of years has really forestalled that."	
1/28/2020	The House Armed Services Committee holds a hearing, "Security Update on the Korean Peninsula."	
2/5/2020	Responding to questions during a forum with foreign ambassadors at the non-profit Meridian International Center in Washington, DC, National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien emphasizes China's role "to assist us as we pressure the North Koreans to come to the table.... The Chinese have to enforce the sanctions against North Korea. They've got to stop the ship-to-ship transfers. They have to send the labor—the folks who are engaged in labor in China, and then sending remittances back to North Korea to keep the economy going."	
2/13/2020	President Trump's former chief of staff, John Kelly, reportedly tells an audience at Drew University that Kim Jong-un "will never give his nuclear weapons up.... President Trump tried—that's one way to put it. But it didn't work. I'm an optimist most of the time, but I'm also a realist, and I never did think Kim would do anything other than play us for a while, and he did that fairly effectively."	
2/13/2020	Federal prosecutors in Brooklyn file an indictment against Chinese telecommunications company Huawei for, among other reasons, involvement in business and technology projects in North Korea and for trying to conceal the full scope of its involvement.	

Date	Event	
2/13/2020	In his written testimony for a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command Commander General Terrence J. O'Shaughnessy says, "recent engine testing suggests North Korea may be prepared to flight test an even more capable ICBM design that could enhance Kim's ability to threaten our homeland during a crisis or conflict." He also says, "In the last year, North Korea has tested several new short-range missile systems, demonstrating advancing technologies that could eventually be incorporated into its strategic systems."	
2/15/2020	On the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference, Secretary of State Michael Pompeo meets with Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi and Republic of Korea Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha.	
3/1/2020	Addressing the COVID-19 outbreak in his annual speech commemorating Korea's March 1 st Independence Movement, President Moon says, "I am looking forward to cooperation with North Korean healthcare.... The lives of the Korean people will be safer when the two Koreas can respond together when infectious diseases spread among humans and animals and jointly cope with disasters and catastrophes in border areas and climate change on the Korean Peninsula."	
3/2/2020		North Korea test launches two short-range ballistic missiles (KN-25 MLRS). Asked whether he has a reaction to the launches, President Trump says "No, I have no reaction. Short-term missiles—no. No. None."
3/2/2020		The Treasury Department sanctions and the Justice Department indicts two Chinese individuals for helping North Korea launder over \$100 million in stolen cryptocurrency funds.
3/4/2020	In the first known direct communication between the leaders of the two Koreas since October 2019, Kim Jong-un sends a letter to Moon expressing his "condolences" to South Koreans combating the COVID-19 outbreak. According to the Blue House, Kim made references to Kim's "unwavering friendship and trust towards President Moon," though he made no mention of South Korea's recent proposals for inter-Korean public health cooperation.	
3/4/2020	Responding to a question at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, "Department of Defense Budget Posture," Secretary of Defense Mark Esper says the North Korea ballistic missile threat is "increasingly complicated as they seek to modernize the full range of missile systems."	
3/9/2020		North Korea test launches three short-range ballistic missiles (KN-25).
3/21/2020		North Korea test launches two short range ballistic missiles (KN-24).
3/22/2020	Kim Yo-jong, Kim Jong-un's sister, writes in KCNA that President Trump sent her brother a letter offering cooperation in combating the novel coronavirus outbreak. The White House confirms that President Trump sent the letter, adding that "The president looks forward to continued communications with Chairman Kim." Although expressing "sincere gratitude" for the letter, Kim Yo-jong laments that relations between the two countries are not as good as the "excellent" relations between the two leaders. She adds that "even at this moment we are working hard to develop and defend ourselves on our own under the cruel environment which the U.S. is keen to 'provide.'"	
3/25/2020	In prepared remarks following a virtual G7 Foreign Ministerial meeting, Secretary of State Pompeo says, "[T]he G7, and all nations, must remain united in calling on North Korea to return to negotiations, and stay committed to applying diplomatic and economic pressure over its illegal nuclear and ballistic missile programs...."	
3/29/2020		North Korea test launches two guided rockets from the KN-25 multiple launch rocket system (MLRS).

3/30/2020	North Korea's Foreign Ministry issues a statement, reported on KCNA, criticizing Secretary of State Pompeo's March 25, 2020, remarks as "slander." "[N]o matter how excellent and firm the relationship between the top leaders of the two countries is, it cannot reverse the U.S. hostile policy towards the DPRK, and the resumption of dialogue much touted by the U.S. is nothing but a decoy to keep us from going our own way."
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Acknowledgments

Joshua Williams, a former CRS research associate, played a vital role in creating the database upon which this report is based.

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