



Security Council Briefing on DPRK, 20 February 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Her Excellency Ambassador Vanessa Frazier
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you ASG Khaled Khiari for your insightful and sobering briefing.

Malta is deeply concerned by the launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile on 18 February, which landed in the waters of Japan's exclusive economic zone and was even visible from the Japanese mainland. Malta is also deeply concerned by the further launch of two short range ballistic missiles early this morning. Malta condemns these launches, which show that DPRK continues to develop and improve its ballistic missile capabilities, in open defiance of Security Council resolutions.

We recall that this Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2397 in 2017 in response to a single ICBM launch. At the time, this Council rightly considered that even one ICBM launch constitutes a threat to regional and international peace and security, and it had responded accordingly.

That resolution states that we would take action to place further restrictions on DPRK. Regrettably, the Council was unable to respond to any of the ICBM launches in 2022, and has instead been forced to remain silent. The Council's sanctions are also being violated by actors who are supporting the DPRK's illicit program. This must stop.



Some will argue that Council action, and even Council meetings, in response to such actions will only provoke DPRK. However, after Resolution 2397 was adopted, no further ICBM launches took place for almost 5 years. This shows the effectiveness of this Council when it is united.

This latest launch is part of an unprecedented pattern of dangerous behaviour witnessed over the past two years, undermining the NPT and global non-proliferation efforts.

DPRK has continued to develop its ballistic missile and nuclear programme, with a record number of ballistic missile launches in 2022. This is in parallel to the adoption by the DPRK of a new doctrine setting out conditions in which DPRK could use nuclear weapons, including pre-emptively. DPRK announced that it would 'exponentially increase' its nuclear weapons arsenal, including tactical weapons, that it would also develop another ICBM system, and launch its first military satellite.

This situation is serious and indefensible, and our inaction is only enabling this behaviour. The Council cannot continue to stand by while its decisions, encapsulated in several resolutions, and credibility are consistently undermined. As members of the Security Council, we have the duty and responsibility to discuss and act on threats to international peace and security. It is for these reasons that Malta supports the US proposal for a PRST.



We urge DPRK to engage in meaningful dialogue towards denuclearisation and adhere to its obligations under Security Council resolutions. DPRK must completely, verifiably, and irreversibly abandon its nuclear and ballistic missiles programmes and return to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and IAEA safeguards. We also urge the DPRK to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty.

Malta remains concerned for the plight of the population living in the DPRK as acute humanitarian needs go unmet. According to the WFP, an estimated 10.7 million people are undernourished and require emergency relief, yet humanitarian access remains highly constrained. In this regard, Malta calls on the government of the DPRK to faithfully engage with the UN and international humanitarian system as well as to enable and facilitate humanitarian assistance to reach those in greatest need across the country.

In conclusion, I reiterate that everyone at this table has a shared objective: peace and denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. Our division and silence only pushes this further out of reach. Now is the time to speak with one voice.