

**Joint Statement by the Republic of Korea, the United States, and Japan  
Special Representatives for the DPRK**

**April 7, 2023**

The Republic of Korea (ROK) Special Representative for Korean Peninsula Peace and Security Affairs Kim Gunn, the U.S. Special Representative for the DPRK Sung Kim, and Japanese Director-General of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau Funakoshi Takehiro had a trilateral meeting on April 7, 2023 in Seoul. The following is the joint statement released by the Special Representatives.

*Begin Text*

We strongly condemn the DPRK's repeated ballistic missile launches as well as its escalatory and destabilizing rhetoric related to the use of nuclear weapons. We express deep regret that the DPRK continues to ignore the hardship of its people, choosing instead to pour its scarce resources into its WMD and ballistic missile programs in clear violation of multiple United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. We commit ourselves to further strengthening and diversifying security cooperation to counter the threat the DPRK poses to regional and global security. The U.S. Special Representative reiterates that the U.S. commitments to defend the ROK and Japan are ironclad.

We urge the DPRK to abide by its obligations under all relevant UNSC resolutions and call on all UN Member States to fully implement the UNSC resolutions. In particular, we underscore that in accordance with UNSC resolution 2397 (2017), UN Member States are required to repatriate all DPRK laborers earning income in their jurisdictions, unless repatriation is prohibited by applicable national or international law. UN Member States should be vigilant and ensure that no work authorizations are renewed or granted to overseas DPRK laborers consistent with UNSC resolution 2375 (2017) and address the DPRK's attempts to evade sanctions.

We reiterate with concern that overseas DPRK IT workers continue using forged identities and nationalities to evade UNSC sanctions and earn income abroad that funds the DPRK's unlawful WMD and ballistic missile programs. We are also deeply concerned about how the DPRK supports these programs by stealing and laundering funds as well as gathering information through malicious cyber activities. According to the UN Panel of Experts, the DPRK attempted to steal as much as \$2 billion between 2015 and 2019 through cyber means. According to private industry estimates, the DPRK stole up to \$1.7 billion in cryptocurrency in 2022 alone. We highlight the importance of our joint efforts to block such illicit revenue streams.

We deplore the human rights violations and abuses in the DPRK and underscore the importance of strengthening cooperation to improve the human rights situation in the DPRK. We express serious concern over the issue of enforced disappearances including the abductions of citizens of the ROK and Japan by the DPRK, as well as unrepatriated prisoners of war. In this regard, we commit to work together to achieve an immediate resolution to the abductions issue, as well as an immediate release of ROK citizens detained in the DPRK.

We reaffirm that the path to dialogue remains open, as demonstrated by repeated attempts to engage the DPRK in dialogue, and urge the DPRK to return to negotiations rather than engage in unlawful, provocative, and escalatory actions. To this end, the U.S. and Japanese Special Representatives express support for the goal of the ROK's "Audacious Initiative."

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