North Korea Chemical Chronology

This annotated chronology is based on the data sources that follow each entry. Public sources often provide conflicting information on classified military programs. In some cases we are unable to resolve these discrepancies, in others we have deliberately refrained from doing so to highlight the potential influence of false or misleading information as it appeared over time. In many cases, we are unable to independently verify claims. Hence in reviewing this chronology, readers should take into account the credibility of the sources employed here.

Inclusion in this chronology does not necessarily indicate that a particular development is of direct or indirect proliferation significant. Some entries provide international or domestic context for technological development and national policymaking. Moreover, some entries may refer to developments with positive consequences for nonproliferation.

2012-2009

6 January 2012
The Daily Yomiuri reports that diplomatic sources within the UN will soon launch an investigation of an attempted North Korean transfer of military-use anti-chemical weapons suits and chemical reagents to Syria that occurred in November 2009. In addition to the 14,000 suits already reported in 2011, The Yomiuri adds that a box of glass ampules carrying liquid or powdered reagents was also seized. The reagents can be used to detect airborne chemical agents in an offensive or defensive capacity during a chemical attack. Greek authorities intercepted the North Korean shipment from a Liberian-flagged ship bound for Syria.

31 December 2011
An U.S. National Intelligence report claims that North Korea has “a longstanding chemical weapon program” that maintains large stockpile of chemical weapon agents. It is widely believed that Chagang Province of North Korea is the area for manufacturing both chemical and biological weapons. South Korea is developing defensive measures against chemical attacks from North Korea.

17 November 2011
Agence France-Presse reports that Greece intercepted almost 14,000 anti-chemical weapon protection suits en
route from North Korea to Syria in 2009. An unnamed diplomat states that the shipment was headed to Latakia, Syria. The seizure was not reported to the UN Security Council until September 2011 in talks over sanctions against North Korea, and the destination of Syria was not initially mentioned.


7 October 2010
Kwon Yang-joo, an expert from the Korea Institute of Defense Analyses estimates that North Korea can produce up to “1.25 million chemical bombs.” According to Kwon, the chemical agents “could contaminate about 2,500 square kilometers.”


8 October 2009
Anonymous sources within the Chinese military report to Asahi Shimbun, that China detected Sarin gas in November 2008 and February 2009 near the city of Dandong, along the North Korean border. Chinese Special Forces detected 0.015-0.03 micrograms of gas per cubic meter during regular surveys. The Chinese suspect “an accidental release” took place during North Korea’s transport or testing of chemical agents. Pyongyang does not make any public statements responding to the press reports. Beijing steps up its surveillance of the border.


2007-2005

11 January 2007
In testimony before the US Senate, Lieutenant General Michael Maples, Director of the US Defense Intelligence Agency, reaffirmed US suspicions regarding North Korea’s weapons of mass destruction programs. With respect to chemical weapons, Maples stated, "DIA believes North Korea has had a longstanding chemical weapons stockpile of nerve, blister, blood, and choking agents."


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14 September 2007
The US Department of State released the 2007 International Religious Freedom Report, which cited unconfirmed reports that North Korean prisoners detained for their religious beliefs may have been made human subjects for chemical and biological agent testing by the North Korean government. The report further notes that these allegations are very difficult to verify independently. Previous editions of the International Religious Freedom Report contain similar language.

10 October 2007
A South Korean lawmaker, citing intelligence data, claimed that North Korea developed a new short-range missile capable of delivering chemical warheads. The missile, known as the KN-2, is propelled by solid fuel, has a range of roughly 120 km, and may carry up to a 500 kg payload. According to one report, the KN-2 is based on the Russian SS-21 missile.

27 November 2007
A Taiwanese official announced the government was investigating the Yicheng Company, a Taiwanese trading firm, on suspicion it had illegally exported an industrial filtering device to North Korea via China. The filtering device could be used in plutonium extraction and chemical and biological weapons manufacture.

December 2006
In its 2006 Defense White Paper, the South Korean Ministry of Defense stated with respect to North Korea’s chemical and biological weapons programs, "It is assessed that North Korea has been producing poison gas and biological weapons since the 1980s. It is believed that 2,500 to 5,000 tons of a variety of agents including nerve agents remain stored in a number of facilities...and that North Korea is able to produce biological weapons such as the bacteria of anthrax, smallpox, and cholera."

2004-2003

1 February 2004
BBC television released a documentary, entitled "Access to Evil," which alleged that North Korea had killed political prisoners using gas chambers for the purpose of chemical weapons development. The documentary featured the

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testimony of a former North Korean prison officer, who claimed to have witnessed entire families being gassed. Supporting documentary evidence, provided by a North Korean electrical engineer who worked at the February 8 Vinalon Complex in Hamhung, where human experiments were allegedly carried out, was also presented. In response, North Korea denied chemical experiments on prisoners, and accused the United States of conducting chemical weapons experiments on North Korean prisoners during the Korean War. South Korea responded to the BBC documentary with skepticism. A spokeswoman representing South Korea's Unification Ministry stated, "We have no official comment on whether humans were used for tests...there are areas [of the documentary] that are not completely free of doubt." Activists in South Korea have alleged that the government does not want to further endanger relations with the North, and therefore is avoiding confronting North Korea over the issue.


1 March 2004
South Korea President Roh Moo-hyun says in a holiday speech that he is confident the North Korean nuclear issue will be resolved peacefully through the Six-party Talks. Roh also reiterates his call for reducing dependence on the United States in foreign affairs and military support.


2 March 2004
U.S. President George W. Bush tells visiting South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon that the second round of Six-party Talks was fruitful because the six nations have clearly demonstrated that North Korea should dismantle its nuclear program.


2 March 2004
U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell says that the Six-party Talks last week produced "a good deal of progress" and that the United States will be patient in pursuing the current negotiations with diplomacy. Powell adds "whatever they [North Korea] are doing or not doing they will not force us or pressure us into any kind of a deal that is anything short of CVID [complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement]."

— "Powell Says US in No Hurry over North Korea Nuclear Crisis,” Agence France Presse, 4 March 2004, in Lexis-
2 March 2004
UN Secretary General Kofi Annan praises the outcome of the latest Six-party Talks, citing "progress" and a "noticeable step forward" toward a denuclearized Korean Peninsula. Annan also promises to support the six nations "on ways to mobilize the support of the international community to [the denuclearization] end."

3 March 2004
South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun says his government will continue dialogue and exchanges with North Korea despite a request from U.S. officials to sever ties and press North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons ambitions.

4 March 2004
Russian Ambassador to Seoul Teymuraz O. Ramishvili says the six nations participating in the Six-party Talks need to utilize flexibility with the North Korea nuclear issue because the international community may not have the legal authority to stop North Korea's peaceful nuclear activities. He argues, "According to international law, it is impossible to stop such programs. But it could be considered in a diplomatic and political context."

4 March 2004
U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell tells reporters that the United States is in no hurry to find a solution to the North Korean nuclear crisis, saying, "We will be patient in pursuing this policy. The president strongly believes that a diplomatic solution is possible and we are not in any urgency to achieve that solution. We want a good solution."

4 March 2004
South Korea's National Security Council (NSC) proposes new security policy initiatives to enhance security on the

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Korean Peninsula and allow Seoul to play a leading role in resolving the North Korea nuclear issue. Kwŏn Chin-ho, National Security Adviser to President Roh Moo-hyun, says at a press briefing that some of the proposed measures are replacing the Korean War armistice with a "peace regime," regaining wartime command and control of ROK troops from USFK, pursuing the "peace and prosperity policy" with North Korea, and restructuring the ROK army. The NSC publication, titled Peace, Prosperity and National Security, marks the first time Seoul has officially released a publication concerning the nation's overall national security.


4-5 March 2004
According to the New York Times, a new CIA classified intelligence report is presented to White House officials detailing for the first time how Pakistan's Khan Research Laboratories (KRL) was able to provide North Korea with equipment and technology necessary to develop uranium-based nuclear weapons, including nuclear fuel, centrifuges and warhead designs. The assessment, partly based on interrogations of Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan and his associates from KRL by the Pakistani officials, purportedly provides a history of KRL's dealings with North Korea that started in the early 1990s. According to the New York Times, intelligence officials also claim North Korea obtained some parts through the same suppliers and middlemen as Libya.


7 March 2004
South Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ban Ki-moon meets with Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi in Tokyo, and the two parties agree "to communicate closely and cooperate" to settle North Korea's nuclear issue through the six-party framework.


8 March 2004
A commentary by North Korea's Rodong Sinmun criticizes South Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ban Ki-moon for his recent remarks made in Washington regarding inter-Korea economic exchanges. Ban said it would be difficult to conduct economic exchanges between the two Koreas unless the current nuclear issue is settled. The commentary argues that the North's desire to have a nuclear deterrent force to "defend its right to existence and sovereignty" is natural and the statement by Ban corresponds to "anti-national and anti-reunification criminal acts."

—"S. Korean Foreign Minister's Unreasonable Remarks Flailed," Korean Central News Agency, 8 March 2004,

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8 March 2004
A Rodong Sinmun commentary calls for a "verifiable and complete withdrawal" of U.S. forces stationed in South Korea as well as a "complete, verifiable and irreversible security assurance" guaranteed by the conclusion of a peace agreement and normalization of relations." It also demands that the United States stop its demand for "nuclear renouncement."

9 March 2004
The Rodong Sinmun, official daily of the Korean Workers' Party, warns that any U.S. economic sanctions as part of an effort to settle the North Korea nuclear crisis would amount to a "military operation aimed at staging a large-scale war" against North Korea.

10 March 2004
Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson visits South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun, and the two leaders issue a joint statement that "a peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue through dialogue is essential for the maintenance of peace and stability not only in Northeast Asia but globally." Persson announced yesterday that he may visit Pyongyang to address North Korea's nuclear ambitions and issues concerning past abductions of Japanese citizens.

10 March 2004
A DPRK foreign ministry spokesperson says that the country's reluctance to abandon its nuclear program is a response to U.S. hostile policies against North Korea. The spokesperson adds, "If [the U.S.] persists in demanding a 'verifiable, irreversible and complete abandoning' of [North Korea's] nuclear program it should first promise a verifiable, irreversible and complete abandoning of its hostile policies against it."

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**12 March 2004**

Mitchell Reiss, director of Policy Planning at the U.S. State Department, says that the U.S. is willing to pursue a "normal relationship" with North Korea as long as the latter "accepts international demands for complete elimination of its nuclear weapons program."


**12 March 2004**

South Korea's National Assembly passes an unprecedented impeachment bill that strips President Roh Moo-hyun of all executive powers until the Constitutional Court rules on the impeachment case. According to the ROK Constitution, Prime Minister Goh Kun assumes power as acting president.


**12 March 2004**

White House spokesman Scott McClellan tells reporters that impeachment of South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun will not adversely impact the Six-party Talks on North Korea's nuclear program. U.S. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher says that Secretary Colin Powell spoke with South Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Ban Ki-moon, and the two officials confirmed to continue "to work together on issues of mutual concern, including things like the Six-party Talks and the Korean forces that are going to Iraq."


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14 March 2004
A spokesman for North Korea's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland says the impeachment of South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun has "pushed the political situation in south [sic] Korea to an unpredictable phase and brought an unbearable insult and disgrace to the south Korean people." The spokesman holds the United States responsible saying, "The U.S. had hatched such plot for 'impeachment' in south [sic] Korea since October last year."

16 March 2004
North Korea's Korean Central News Agency states that Pyongyang was forced to cancel the 15 March meeting of the North-South Committee for the Promotion of Economic Cooperation because the impeachment of South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun has created a "state of anarchy and is making it impossible for both sides to have safe contacts."

16 March 2004
Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao says, "The Chinese side has completed a concept paper [on the creation of working groups for the Six-party Talks]. We have submitted the paper to the other five parties concerned for opinion." Concurrently, South Korea's Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Su-hyŏk arrives in Beijing to discuss the setup of working groups and the Six-party Talks.

17 March 2004
The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei says he wants IAEA inspectors to return to North Korea "as early as possible" with "comprehensive" rights to examine nuclear facilities. Speaking after a meeting with U.S. President George W. Bush and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, he refers to the previous limits on IAEA inspectors prior to being expelled by Pyongyang at the end of 2002.

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19 March 2004
Referring to combined U.S.-South Korean military exercises, a North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesperson says that North Korea is forced to boost its nuclear arsenal in "quality and quantity" because the U.S. continues its "increased military threat."

19 March 2004
In a report to Japan’s ruling Liberal Democratic Party, the Japanese Foreign Ministry calls on North Korea to abandon its nuclear program "in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner." The report also expresses concerns about North Korea’s ballistic missile program.

24 March 2004
North Korean leader Kim Jong Il meets with visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing to coordinate and discuss the prospects of a third round of Six-party Talks.

27 March 2004
Radio Pyongyang reiterates that the DPRK will never accept the demand for "complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling" of its nuclear weapons programs first. The broadcast insists the United States must provide economic aid and written security guarantees first and that North Korea has the right to keep civilian nuclear programs.

29 March 2004
South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon visits Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and Assistant Foreign Minister Dai Bingguo in Beijing to discuss the creation of a working group for the Six-party Talks framework. Ban also asks Li, who visited Pyongyang to discuss the Six-party Talks 23-25 March, to work to grant asylum to North Korean defectors detained in China for humanitarian reasons.

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30 March 2004
According to North Korean media, a North Korean engineer who provided evidence supporting allegations that North Korea conducted chemical weapons tests on humans for a February 2004 BBC documentary recanted and admitted the documents were faked. The man, Kang Pyong-Sop, was arrested along with his family by Chinese authorities as he tried to flee North Korea and was returned to North Korean authorities, according to human rights activists. It is not known under what conditions Kang admitted to North Korea that the documents were false, but rights groups note that returnees to North Korea often face torture and imprisonment.

24 June 2004
Citing a South Korean magazine article, North Korea issues a litany of accusations against the US and South Korea, accusing them of manufacturing and stockpiling numerous chemical and biological weapons on the Korean peninsula. No evidence was provided to substantiate the bulk of the claims.

28 July 2004
The BBC program "Newsnight" interviewed a former North Korean research scientist who claimed that North Korea regularly tested chemical agents on prisoners. The man, whose identity was concealed, claimed he had performed experiments on prisoners since 1979, with the objective of determining how much lethal gas was required to kill a human, in order to calculate the amount of agent necessary to "annihilate Seoul." The report was produced by the reporter responsible for a February 2004 BBC documentary, "Access to Evil," which documented similar claims from other North Korean defectors. The new report increased pressure on the South Korean government to address the issue, which it has avoided in order to avoid inflaming tensions with the North.

24 September 2004
The South Korean government announced that a South Korean businessman had illegally exported 107 tons of sodium cyanide to North Korea, via transshipment through China. Sodium cyanide is a dual-use chemical which may be used to manufacture chemical weapons, including nerve agents. The man, who did not receive government approval for the export, was sentenced to 18 months in jail. The North Korean government said, via its official news agency, that the sodium cyanide was not for chemical weapons, stating, "Deals in sodium cyanide are being done among countries on the principle of meeting each other's needs."
—Park Chan-kyong, "ROK Says Sodium Cyanide Shipped to North Korea via China Sep 2003," Agence France Presse,

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18 May 2003
According to Japanese public safety and customs authorities, six Japanese trading companies associated with North Koreans living in Japan received orders from North Korea since the late 1990s for products that could be used in the production of missiles and weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons. Among the materials ordered were gas chromatography analyzers, vacuum freeze dryers, constant temperature incubation tanks, and stainless steels.
—"Six Japanese Firms Received Orders for WMD-Related Materials from DPRK," Sankei Shimbun (Tokyo), 19 May 2003, OSC Document JPP20030520000099.

December 2003
In an unclassified report to the US Congress, the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) assessed that North Korea has "continued to acquire dual-use chemicals that could potentially be used to support Pyongyang's long-standing chemical warfare program. North Korea's chemical warfare capabilities included the ability to produce bulk quantities of nerve, blister, choking, and blood agent, using its sizeable, although aging, chemical industry. North Korea possesses a stockpile of unknown size of these agents and weapons..."

2002-2001
5 March 2002
General Thomas A. Schwartz, Commander in Chief of the United Nations Command/Combined Forces, United States Forces Korea, testifies before the US Senate. His assessment of the North Korean military posture included the following statement: "A large number of North Korean chemical weapons threaten both our military forces and the civilian population centers of South Korea and Japan. We assess that North Korea has very large chemical stockpiles and is self-sufficient in the production of chemical components for first generation chemical agents...North Korea can deploy missiles with chemical warheads and potentially have the ability to weaponize biological agents for missile delivery."
—Thomas A. Schwartz, Statement before the 107th Congress, Senate Armed Services Committee, 5 March 2002, p. 8.

29 August 2002
In Seoul, John Bolton, US Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, says that "in addition to its disturbing weapons of mass destruction activities, North Korea also is the world's foremost peddler of ballistic missile-related equipment, components, materials and technical expertise." Bolton also says that George W. Bush's reference to North Korea as being part of an "axis of evil" was "more than a rhetorical flourish--it

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was factually correct." Bolton says the Agreed Framework is "in serious doubt" unless safeguards inspections begin soon, and there is "little doubt that North Korea has a chemical weapons program and "one of the most robust offensive bioweapons programs on earth."


29 January 2002
US President George W. Bush delivers a State of the Union address in which he identifies North Korea, Iran, and Iraq as members of an "Axis of Evil." With respect to North Korea, Bush stated, "North Korea is a regime arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction, while starving its citizens."


1 January 2001
The South Korean newspaper Sindong-a reports that Unit 32, the most secretive element within the DPRK Nuclear and Chemical Defense Bureau, oversees chemical weapons research and production. It is further estimated that chemical warheads for the Nodong-1 are also researched and developed by Unit 32.


18 October 2001
The DPRK claims that Japan, under the pretense of building defenses against chemical warfare, is in fact "making preparations for biological and chemical warfare."


29 October 2001
P’yongyang’s Korean Central Broadcasting Station reports on past chemical and biological warfare (CBW) research conducted in the United States, saying that "this shows how much the US warmongers have run amok recklessly to develop biochemical weapons."


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20 November 2001
ROK Defense Minister Kim Dong Shin tells the South Korean parliament that the DPRK possesses up to 5,000 tons of biochemical weapons, stored at six different facilities.
—Yonhap News Agency broadcast, in English, transcribed in FBIS Document KPP20011120000003.

28 November 2001
South Korean military sources indicate that North Korea possesses 2,500 to 5,000 metric tons of chemical weapons. Chemical weapons (CW) agents included in this arsenal are VX, sarin, and phosgene. [Note: The figure of 5,000 tons is also used in a statement by ROK Foreign Minster Yu Chong Ha on 6 May 1997. This assessment is in line with other recent estimates, ranging up to 4,500 tons.]

2000-1997

February 2000
General Thomas Schwartz, in charge of America's 37,000 troops in South Korea, warns that North Korea has "tremendous capability" in terms of both conventional and chemical weapons despite the suffering the country has endured economically in recent years.

May 2000
In an unclassified report, a special advisor to the commander in chief (CINC) of the UN Command in Korea reports that "USFK [US Forces in Korea] J2 assesses that the North is self-sufficient in the production of chemical components for first generation chemical agents. They have produced stockpiles estimated at up to 5,000 metric tons of several types of agents, including nerve, choking, blister, and blood."

June 2000
"South Korea will press North Korea to scrap or at least reduce its chemical weapons stockpile, a ROK defense official says. "North Korea is presumed to possess 2,500 to 5,000 tons of chemical weapons."

21 January 1999
A New York Times editorial, entitled "Reducing Russian Dangers," suggests that former Soviet weapons scientists might abet rogue nations in acquiring weapons of mass destruction: "There is no longer any threat of Russia's

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deliberately attacking the United States. But Moscow's still-formidable stocks of nuclear bombs, nuclear ingredients and biological and chemical warfare agents pose a different kind of danger. Much of this material is inadequately secured, and the workers guarding it are paid poorly or not at all. That creates an unacceptably high risk that some material could be sold to potential aggressors like Iraq, Libya, North Korea, or Serbia. Many Russian weapons scientists are also unemployed or unpaid and vulnerable to foreign recruitment."

29 January 1999
General Stalislav Petrov, head of Russian nuclear, biological and chemical protection forces, denies the New York Times editorial on 21 January 1999 that suggested Russian chemical weapons technology were proliferating to foreign countries, including Iraq, Libya, North Korea, or Serbia. ITAR-TASS news agency quoted General Stalislav Petrov, as saying: "The escape or transfer of chemical weapons to third countries is out of the question."

10 March 1999
North Korea refutes US assertions that it is developing chemical weapons and instead accuses the United States of employing unconventional munitions during the Korean War.

20 March 1999
South Korea is conducting military exercises in Kumchon County to deflect any North Korean agents that intend to enter the country using hang gliders, paragliders, and hot air balloons to launch chemical weapons attacks. South Korean Defense Ministry officials also report that, "For the past two years, North Korea has been importing hang gliders, motorized paragliders and hot air balloons and has been training a special unit to use them to sneak into South Korea for espionage or possible to launch biological or chemical weapons attacks."

21 April 1999
The North Korean Peace Committee issues a statement that accuses South Korea of developing and stockpiling chemical weapons.

3 June 1999
Japanese officials announce their suspicions that North Korea is developing chemical weapons.

10 June 1999
The South Korean Ministry of National Defense (MND) estimates that the DPRK possesses eight chemicals plants, four research laboratories, and six storage facilities as chemical weapon-related facilities, and that the DPRK would

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employ chemical weapons (CW) agents by means of "mortars, field artillery, multiple rocket launchers (MRLs), and Frog, Scud and Nodong-1 missiles on land, fire support vessels at sea, and fighters, bombers and transport aircraft in the air." The DPRK "has the capability of launching chemical munitions into our forward areas and as far as Pusan and Mokpo. The North may also dare to launch such an attack through its SOF [special operations forces] troops armed with chemical weapons."

14 June 1999
In response to Japanese media claims that the DPRK is equipped with chemical and biological weapons, the North Korean official news agency (KCNA) issues a categorical denial.

October 1999
A South Korean document, originating from the defense ministry, states that North Korea is increasingly focusing on stockpiling chemical weapons. It is estimated that current stockpiles lie around 5,000 tons, five times what it was in 1997.

March 1998
US Undersecretary of Defense Slocombe states that North Korea is "working on acquiring nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons capability that poses a threat to Japan."

July 1998
Satellite images (Spot Image, software by Research Systems) obtained by a South Korean news agency purports to confirm that North Korea is producing chemical weapons in facilities along its northern border with China. A facility is identified in Sakchu "believed to had chemical agents into military ordnance, possibly even missile warheads."
The imagery also seems to show widespread environmental damage around the facility, leading many to believe that the facility is releasing dangerous chemicals into the atmosphere rather than neutralizing them.

19 September 1998
ROK government officials claim that a North Korean "kamikaze" or suicide squad "with some 140 run-down fighters . . . could be outfitted with chemical weapons including poison gas."

1 December 1998
Japan asks the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to urge North Korea to join the

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Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

February 1997
Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy accuses China and North Korea of shipping "terrible chemical weapons" to Syria.

23 April 1997
Hwang Chang Yop, 74, a former tutor of North Korean leader Kim Chong Il who defected to South Korea, asserts that North Korea has developed nuclear and chemical weapons that are "capable of scorching" South Korea and Japan. He also states that North Korea could potentially start a war out of sheer desperation.

24 April 1997
North Korea advises that the defector who claims North Korea possesses nuclear and chemical weapons is deranged and "sick with paranoia."
—"North Korea says defector is deranged and paranoid," Chicago Sun Times, 24 April 1997.

6 May 1997
Following the questioning of defecting DPRK Workers' Party Secretary, Hwang Chang Yop, South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Chong Ha states that North Korea is believed to possess about 5,000 tons of chemical weapons. In testimony before the National Assembly Unification and Foreign Affairs Committee, he declares that North Korea operates eight chemical weapons plants in "Oaji" and elsewhere that are capable of producing 5,000 tons of chemical weapons annually. He also said that the ROK government would "urge North Korea at international meetings to join the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)." [Note 1: The foreign minister in this case was probably referring to Aoji-ri; Note 2: The figure of 5,000 tons is also referred to in a 28 November 2001 report quoting South Korean military sources.]
—"South Korean Minister Says North has 5,000 Tons of Chemical Weapons," 8 May 1997, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts.

7 May 1997
ROK Vice Foreign Minister Yi Ki Chu expresses "deep concern over the failure of North Korea to join the CWC [Chemical Weapons Convention]," saying that the DPRK's stockpile of chemical weapons poses a threat to the security of both South Korea and Northeast Asia.

19 May 1997
Citing a threat from the DPRK, Secretary of Defense William Cohen says that the United States has increased its spending on counterproliferation measures, especially on chemical defenses. "I think the chemical weapons threat

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is proliferating far beyond North Korea," he said.

5 July 1997
South Korean Foreign Minister Yu Chong Ha testifies that the ROK government is working with the United States to develop counter-measures to North Korean chemical and biological weapons.

11 July 1997
A ROK Ministry of National Defense report claims that 1,000 tons of chemical weapons are already in the North Korean arsenal, and that the DPRK has a capability to manufacture 5,000 tons a year.
—"South Korea to Link Aid to Repositioning of North’s Military Forces," BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 12 July 1997.

August 1997
South Korean Joint Chief of Staff states in an official report that North Korea is developing about 15 tons of chemical weapons daily and has a stockpile of approximately 1,000 tons. Of the latter, 70 tons are actually filled in munitions and are deployed, while the remaining are in bulk storage.

21 October 1997
Ch’oe Ju Hwal testifies that North Korea possessed the following chemical weapons (CW) agents in its arsenal: sarin, soman, tabun, V-agents; mustard, lewisite, hydrogen cyanide, and cyanogen chloride (yamoshun).

1996-1950
March 1996
US officials believe that North Korea would definitely use chemical weapons if it attacks South Korea, but the likelihood of such an attack is quite minimal.

8 April 1996
Japanese police arrests Tanetoshi Li, 34, after he allegedly exported hydrofluoric acid and sodium fluoride to North Korea without permission from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry.

11 April 1996
Citing a secret Defense Intelligence Agency report, Shukan Gendai alleges that North Korea has been developing an offensive chemical weapons capability since 1990. It also claims that there are plants all over the country (including

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those at Kanggye and Sakchu) producing over 20 types of chemical warfare agents, such as sarin and potassium cyanide.

August 1996
Analyst Joseph Bermudez reports on 12 North Korean chemical facilities alleged to be manufacturing chemical weapons (CW) agents. Facilities include the storage depots at Kanggye and Sakchu, Factory No. 279 (CW defense equipment), and "store offices" at Maram and Chiha-ri. Six corps munitions depots specializing in CW ordnance are found at Sanum-ri, Hwangch’ŏn, Samsan-dong, Sariwŏn, and Wangjaebong. CW agent manufacturing is alleged to take place at the following cities in chemical plants: Anju, Aoji-ri, Ch’ŏngjin, Hamhung, Hwasung, Manp’o, Sakchu, Sariwon, Shinhung, Shin’ŭiju, and Sunch’ŏn.

December 1996
A Korean resident in Japan, Kim Won-pong, lists nine factories in the North that are capable of producing chemical weapons (CW) agents, these being located in Anju, Aoji-ri, Ch’ŏngjin, Hamhŭng (two facilities), Hwasŏng, Manp’o, Shin’ŭiju, and Sunch’ŏn.

14 April 1995
According to the Seoul Shinmun, "North Korea is estimated to have up to 5,000 tons of chemical weapons, most of which is sarin (GB) gas...and only a limited stock of other types of chemical weapons, such as those that have suffocating and blood-affecting properties."

March 1995
According to Yonhap, "North Korea has stockpiled about 1,000 tons of chemical weapons including those of sarin...North Korea, he said, is capable of producing 4,500 tons of chemical weapons a year in peace-time and 12,000 tons in war."
—"South Says North Korea Has 1,000 Tons of Chemical Weapons," Yonhap news agency, Seoul, 21 March 1995, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts.

22 September 1995
South Korea’s National Unification Board submits a report to the National Assembly that says North Korea has about one ton of biological and chemical weapons, and that they can be delivered by FROG-5s, FROG-7s and Scud missiles. The report lists the following biological and chemical agents: blister agent, nerve agent, choking agent, blood agent, tear gas, cholera, plague, anthrax, and hemorrhagic fever.

23 September 1995
South Korea’s Foreign Ministry submits a report to the National Assembly that says North Korea has between 1,000 and 5,000 tons of biological and chemical weapons (combined). The report says that most of North Korea’s artillery and multiple rocket launchers are capable of delivering chemical weapons to Seoul. Furthermore, North Korea’s Scud missiles are capable of striking all of South Korea.

29 September 1995
In testimony before the National Assembly, General Kim Hong Rae, South Korean Air Force Chief of Staff, says that North Korea has deployed about 600 FROGs and Scuds. Kim says that North Korea has chemical weapons, and is developing nuclear weapons. General Kim also says the United States has three intelligence satellites monitoring North Korean military activities.

22 February 1994
In a white paper, the South Korean National Unification Board claims that North Korea has eight functional chemical weapons plants and three laboratories working on biological weapons capabilities. The government white paper also alleges that its northern neighbor has 1,000 tons of stored bio-chemical weapons.

22 March 1994
Recent DPRK military defector Yi Chung Kuk states that "North Korea has chemical weapons enough to demolish the southern part of the peninsula without using nuclear weapons."

April 1994
Sgt. Yi Chung Kuk, who defected to South Korea on 18 March [1994], tells a news conference that North Korea has

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the technology to mount chemical weapons onto Scud missiles though it is not capable of mounting nuclear weapons.


April 1994
Yi Chung Kuk, a former member of the People's Armed Forces Nuclear Chemical Defense Bureau, alleges link between the "February 8 Vinalon Complex" and chemical weapons production. He further alleges that the father of "vinalon," a synthetic fiber produced in North Korea, also contributed his expertise to North Korea's weapons of mass destruction research and development, including chemical weapons.


26 September 1994
The South Korean National Unification Board accuses North Korea of testing chemical weapons on its political prisoners. The unification board also reports to the National assembly that North Korea currently possesses about 1,000 tons of chemicals for use in a war.


15 January 1993
The North Korean Foreign Ministry denies that its government is developing and stockpiling chemical weapons and its official position against the development of such unconventional weapons has not changed from before: "The Korean People's Democratic Republic has never had any chemical weapons and the stand of its government, which comes out against its development, production, stockpiling and application, has not changed a bit."


28 April 1993
A Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) broadcast declares that "It is a fact known to the world that the DPRK, which sets store by international law and has complied with it in good faith, has no chemical weapons."


May 1993
Analyst Joseph Bermudez reports that North Korea is estimated to have the capacity to "produce at least 4,500 tons of chemical agents annually, and it has already stockpiled 1,000 tons of chemical weapons."


29-30 May 1993
North Korea successfully tests Nodong-1 missile. The missile is suspected of being able to deliver a chemical

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payload.

**February 1992**
Kim Il Sung directs that protective masks be provided to the entire population of the DPRK. Regular nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) defense drills are also required of both military and civilian personnel. [Note: Apparently, this is the first time that such extensive training and equipment have been given to the civilian population in North Korea.]

**23 October 1992**
The ROK Agency for National Security Planning claims the DPRK had "six chemical-weapons storage centers, each outfitted with a stockpile of 1,000 tons of material--a portion of which the military keeps in the payloads of artillery pieces."

**18 November 1992**
North Korea categorically refutes all South Korean claims that it is developing a chemical weapons stockpile. It states that the South Korean propaganda is baseless for it is counting pharmaceutical and medicinal facilities to be part of the alleged chemical weapons' infrastructure. North Korea also charges that the US government has placed "as many as 25,000 drums of chemical weapons of 10-odd types, including poisonous gas" in South Korea.
—"North Korea Denies Reports of Chemical Weapons Production," BBC, 18 November 1992, Summary of World Broadcasts.

**24 November 1992**
Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev says that his country has urged North Korea to open itself up to inspections of nuclear facilities and to join the Chemical Weapons Convention.
—"Russia Calls on North Korea to Agree to Nuclear Inspections," BBC, 24 November 1992.

**1991**
Offensive roles of the nuclear and chemical defense units in the Korean People's Army are codified in a military manual, Konggyokchon [Offensive Warfare], published at the Kim Il Song Military University. According to this 1991 manual, in wartime and during conduct of military operations, nuclear and chemical defense units would be organized into chemical reconnaissance and flame-thrower units.

**8 November 1991**
South Korean President Roh Tae Woo announced that the ROK would not manufacture, possess, or use either nuclear or chemical weapons. President Roh also encouraged the North Korean government to make a reciprocal pledge.

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11 June 1990
US Secretary of Defense Cheney says that 23 countries have plans to develop chemical weapons, and that 10 others, including North Korea, already possess chemical weapons.

22 June 1990
In a speech before the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, US Secretary of Defense Cheney states that 23 countries are involved in developing a chemical warfare program, to one extent or another. Cheney notes that "...23 foreign countries have confirmed or suspected chemical warfare programs, and 10 have, or may have, biological warfare programs. Once again, that would include Iran, Iraq, Syria, Libya, and North Korea."

1989
DPRK government announces its desire for "turning the Korean peninsula into a nuclear free, peace zone as well as a zone free from chemical weapons."

January 1989
The reported inventory of chemical weapon (CW) agents in the DPRK includes sarin (GB), tabun (GA), phosgene (CX), adamsite (DM), mustard agent family and blood agents (hydrogen cyanide).

January 1989
North Korean Foreign Minister Kim Young Nam states that his country was not involved with producing or storing nuclear and chemical weapons and was not interested in importing such weapons either.

January 1989
Chemical weapon (CW) agents are reportedly produced at 11 locations in North Korea.

29 January 1987
ROK Minister of Defense, Lee Ki Baek tells the Korea Herald that "North Korea has stockpiled some 180 to 250 metric tons of chemical weapons, including mustard gas and nerve gas."
May 1985
A senior participant at the 7th ROK/US Military Committee Meeting says "it is quite likely that North Korea would use its chemical weapons . . . and has stockpiled considerable amounts of chemical weapons."

1984
Korean People's Army (KPA) officer (phonetically rendered as "Ting Jung Chen") is named chief of the [KPA's?] External Business Affairs bureau based on his success in CW agent production. [Note: According to testimony from Ch'oe Ju-Hwal, a DPRK defector, the position described is usually held by a KPA officer with a rank of general. This organization may be part of the "Yongaksan Company" in the External Economic General Bureau under the Second Economic Committee.]

May 1979
The US Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) reports that "North Korea has developed a protective chemical weapons (CW) capability. It is further estimated that the DPRK would proceed with development of an offensive capability, including the production and weaponization of CW agents.

Late 1970s
Kim Jung Chan, a Korean People's Army (KPA) officer who served as military attaché in the North Korean embassy in East Germany, reportedly obtains "technical know-how" for the production of chemical weapons (CW) agents from the East German government.

Late 1970s
Ongoing, large-scale production of chemical agents reported in North Korea, including cyanogen chloride, as well as limited production of mustard and Tabun.

1966
The Soviet Union resumes technical assistance to the DPRK in 1966, including nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) training materials. Moscow also provides "small quantities" of mustard and nerve agents to North Korea.

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1961
Kim Il-sung announces the "Declaration for Chemicalization," an effort said to include construction of research and production facilities for chemical weapons production.

1961
The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) establishes the "chemical bureau" (later designated as the Nuclear and Chemical Defense Bureau in 1981) under the Ministry of the People's Armed Forces.

1957-1961
Under the "First Five-Year Plan," North Korea begins development of an offensive, chemical weapons production capability.

1954
The Korean People's Army (KPA) establishes regular chemical/biological units. [Note: Considering this occurs following the Korean War (1950-53), these units were most likely defensive in training and material.]

1950s
North Korea reportedly receives sarin (GB, nerve agent) from the USSR. Pyongyang later builds chemical weapons plants with technical assistance from the Soviet Union. [Note: The source provides no details concerning the exact nature of these "chemical weapons plants."]
—"South Says North Korea Has 1,000 Tons of Chemical Weapons," Yonhap News Agency, Seoul, 21 March 1995, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts.

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