

Committee: Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Committee
Issue: Civic Space and Surveillance
Chairs: Suyoung Choi, Christina Kunz, Chae Young Hyun

Introduction

According to Michelle Bachelet, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the participation of society in political and social life is essential to the sustainability of any democracy (Bachelet: 2019). When social groups have the capability to engage in political decision-making and can freely express critique of their government in a peaceful manner, the pillars of human rights and effective governance are protected.

This freedom of expression and opinion as well as the freedom of assembly have been anchored in international law by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN:1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (UN: 1976), in order to ensure a legal standard for the dissemination of information within and across countries, facilitate dialogue between social groups, and express disagreement through various platforms. If a state is obligated to ensure free access to civic space and participation in cultural life - then access to the internet and its cultural forums is necessary. Participation in cultural life acts as an economic booster, as it can foster tourism, entrepreneurship and job creation through social inclusion - thus enabling development (Gerschewski & Dukalskis: 2018). It can also act as a driver of development by acting as a resource for cultural contextualization of solutions for development and the realisation of the standing of one's society in the global context (Campagna: 2017). Freedom encompasses the obligation of the state to protect the right to participate in cultural and political life and the right of the individual and the community to determine what language, symbols, traditions, events, expressions and art makes up a culture (Romainville: 2015).

Although civil society networks have been able to grow through the rapid development of technology and social media, these mechanisms simultaneously act as an avenue for governments to control and restrict the movements of civil society and utilise digital media for surveillance and evidence for persecution. New laws restricting the freedom to access information or associate and participate in civil networks are starting to reverse the democratic process in many countries and endangering the work of human rights activists and international organizations world-wide (EFJ: 2020).

Within a functioning democracy, the World Development Report 2020 proclaims, economic and social benefits of inclusion in the political sphere, efficient production and trade chains, and innovation, reaped by a digitized government, positively affect all citizens within the country by improving the overall quality of life (World Bank: 2020). However, in dictatorships, digitization is exclusively utilised to advance the military and economic capabilities of the government while participation in civic space is denied to citizens. This is because such participation inherently requires freedom of information, speech and assembly, which autocracies do not allow (Caravel: 2019). The absence of unrestricted internet access and the surveillance of any and all activities on- and offline, is a deliberate choice made by the regime in order to retain power

over the people. In cases like Hong Kong, Thailand, India and Myanmar (The Guardian: 2021), the government or controlling party uses the disconnection from the internet as a means of hindering democratic movements and bottom-to-top revolution, while trying to impose new laws controlling which information ordinary citizens can access.

What exactly entices governments to block their citizens from participating in civic space and which steps the international community must take to ensure the rights of individuals to privacy, development, education, expression and quality of life are upheld, will be debated within this conference.

Definition of Key Terms

Traditional Media includes radio, newspapers, television, books, flyers and every form of one-way communication in a physical form.

Digital Media refers to all digitized content that can be shared, created, or stored via the internet, computer networks, and every machine-readable format supported by software.

Civic Space is the environment that enables civil society to play a role in the political, economic and social life of our societies.

Worker's Party of Korea (WPK) is the founding and ruling political party of the DPRK of which Kim Jong-un is the General-Secretary. The WPK was founded in 1949 and also controls the Korean People's Army.

National Security Agency is the secret police agency of the DPRK. It is an autonomous agency of the the DPRK's government reporting directly to the Supreme Leader.

Inminban is a Neighbourhood Watch-like form of cooperative local organization in the DPRK. No North Korean person exists outside the inminban system; everyone is a member and is expected to inform law-enforcement of any illegal activity.

Intranet refers to the domestic internet network that exists in the DPRK monitored by the regime. This network, called *Kwangmyong* or Bright Light, was developed in 2000 for educational purposes, simple information provision to the public and propaganda purposes, and is mainly available to government officials and residents of Pyongyang, and other urban areas.

Woolim Tablets are tablets produced for North Korea, which only have access to restricted services and can be used for surveillance of foreign media distribution.

Red Star OS is an operating system based on Mac OS that is installed on devices such as laptops and tablets. Through this system, the government has access to the data of every device connected through Red Star.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) 1976 is a key international human rights treaty, providing a range of protections for civil and political rights, which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) acceded in 1981.

International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESC) 1966 is a multilateral treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is an international document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly that enshrines the rights and freedoms of all human beings.

Status Quo - Human Rights and Civic Space

Right to Education. The right to education is a vital aspect of human rights, as it allows for the development and growth, whether individually, as a community, or as a country. Higher levels of education are directly linked to higher life expectancy and greater quality of life, among others (Buckingham: 2015). The right to education also correlates with more abstract skills, such as the capacity for critical thinking, situational analysis, and independent thought (Global Partnership: 2020). Education occurs as citizens gain knowledge of human rights, and therefore which rights their government is directly or indirectly preventing them from accessing. Technology also informs avenues for action: how to petition, protest, organize, and vote (Piccone: 2018). The ability to quickly gather and spread information is essential for efficient mobilization (Stent: 2019). New digital media fosters coordinated action and dissemination of information at an exponential rate, for a much larger demographic.

The technologies that are available to citizens are, however, controlled by the state; governments are able to withhold, partially or completely, services and technologies such as the internet, severely limiting the options for citizens to engage in protest or reform (Dahlum et al: 2019). In this way the government has almost full power over their ability to accumulate unbiased information.

Right to Privacy. The UN General Assembly Resolution 68/167 states that the right to privacy is affected by the rapid developments in technology and widespread use of the internet, as governments and private companies are able to harness the increased capacity to monitor private information and internet usage (UN: 2013). As such, increased data collection and surveillance may endanger the right to privacy as established by Article 12 of the UDHR (UN: 1948) and Article 17 of the ICCPR (UN: 1976). The information collected digitally can include the constant monitoring of GPS location, conversations that take place in the home, and internet usage (Menand: 2018).

Right to Expression. The right to freedom of expression refers to the right of people to voice their ideas, beliefs and opinions without interference, while being allowed to examine and interchange these ideas and thoughts with others, as established within Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN: 1948). It is considered a key aspect for not only democracy, but functioning civil society, that citizens are able to openly articulate their opinions and views, through art and the internet as well as through demonstrations and protests (Fathy: 2018).

Freedom of Thought. It is linked to civic space through the relationship between the ability for independent thought and moral education in conformity with one's own convictions, to arise from the information, education, expression, and culture, accessible through assembly, digital media and technology (UN: 1976).

Right to Development. In underdeveloped and developing countries, the emergence of mobile phones and the internet led to the ability of lower-class citizens to access information, participate more actively in society and improve their economic standing (World Bank: 2020).

Statement of the Problem

Due to the DPRK's ever-increasing amount of surveillance mechanisms, the country lacks the most basic forms of civic space. The DPRK is known to heavily censor information and, thus, barring its citizens' freedom to access, publish and discuss information that is unbiased or critical of the regime. In the DPRK, non-governmental organizations such as civic groups, alumni, or small clubs are not allowed to form (HRW: 2019).

Most North Korean citizens are not aware that they can create a civil organization as there is no accessible governmental institution or media platform to access such information (Lee et al. 2020). Surprisingly, in the Constitution of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (Article 67), it does state that there is a freedom to create such organizations and citizens are "guaranteed freedom of speech, the press, assembly, demonstration, and association" (Supreme People's Assembly: 1972). Nevertheless, the Workers Party of Korea controls the state and the legal system of the DPRK according to Article 11 of the same Constitution, denying North Korean people the improvement of their own standard of living by ensuring continued reliance on the Kim regime - Kim Jong-un, whose family has ruled the country for three generations, and his loyal political followers.

In the DPRK, state interference comes in many forms: through censorship and monitoring as well as harsh persecution for anyone failing to adhere to the rules (Recorded Future: 2020). Limitations in the digital space also form an obstacle to the right to voice one's opinion, as the organization of protests often occurs via social media (Stent: 2019). Furthermore, when the diffusion of information is either restricted, biased, or simply propagandized, formation of critical opinion and a call for change are unlikely to occur. This demonstrates how the digital space and the physical world are not two separate entities; the limitations and restrictions that exist in the digital space affect people's experiences in real life.

Digital access not only allows people to discover what human rights are, as a wealth of information and communication is afforded by - especially - the internet, but also creates a platform for the authentication and distribution of all types of material and knowledge-bases. However, Article 19 of the UDHR also mentions certain cases in which restrictions could be necessary, one of which is "for the protection of national security or of public order [...] or morals" (UN: 1948). This links to Article 12 of the DPRK's constitution, which proclaims the necessity of the State's protection of the people against "all subversive acts of hostile elements at home and abroad" (Supreme People's Assembly: 1972). For the DPRK, this protection is synonymous with the maintenance and strengthening of the regime, not its people.

Despite the right to freedom of expression being violated by the DPRK regime, there are ways in which people manage to express themselves in the digital space (Kretchun: 2012). The utilization of mobile phones has affected the perspective DPRK citizens have on their freedoms. Because of this, all unapproved foreign media or technology is strictly illegal, with only a small amount of heavily censored information and news accessible to the general population (Chen et al: 2010). Though many citizens increasingly manage to circumvent government restrictions, this limitation ensures continued reliance on the state for

goods, services, and most critically, information. Unfiltered global content and technology, through education and communication, develops political power and would create the opportunity for revolution against the Kim regime (Baek: 2016). It is for this reason that the government resists so strongly against allowing digital rights, instead using new developments in technology to increase their monitoring and surveillance capabilities (Scott: 2014).

The smuggling of digital media from China in the form of DVDs, USBs and mobile phones provides opportunities for North Korean citizens to consume foreign, non-Kim regime propagandized media (Kretchun et al: 2017). The Korean Bar Association posits that even though the DPRK's government tries to prevent the flow of unsanctioned information and media through reinforcement of security measures, the impact of foreign media and information inflow on DPRK citizens can be deemed significant (Korean Bar Association: 2014). The government is aware that the spread of foreign media can put the whole system in danger by loosening the government's grip on the masses. According to scholar Andrei Lankov (2009), information dissemination could help stimulate change in North Korea. If the population starts to doubt its Supreme Leader and no longer believe the propaganda that is being fed to them by the regime, it could very well be the beginning of the end for North Korea's status quo, therefore, the need to prevent political movements against the government leads to the control of actions, speech, and even thoughts of citizens as well as punishment for those who disobey the government (Gerschewski & Dukalskis: 2018). In light of this, the monopolized media, supervised by the propaganda department of the Workers' Party, and the State execute control over the information citizens can access and receive (Gause: 2012).

Secondly, the population is under constant surveillance, monitored by police organs and the National Security Agency, making it near impossible for non-governmental organizations to develop (Korean Bar Association: 2014). Raids are organized in public spaces such as schools, and authorities are regularly searching people's homes for any kind of foreign media (Lee & Hwang: 2004). The punishments for accessing foreign media are incredibly harsh, even resulting in public executions (PSCORE: 2013a). Even before the technological advancements, as well as today, North Korea had various 'person-to-person' social control methods to regulate who accesses external media. These social control mechanisms include a system called the Neighbourhood Inminban, three major surveillance organizations, namely, the State Security Department (SSD), the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), and the Military Security Command (MSC), and the indoctrination of all citizens from an early age to distrust everyone and only show loyalty to the regime (AI: 2016).

The DPRK government invests heavily in the development of digital technologies for government use in order to monitor and control citizens, while digital technologies supporting democracy are withheld (Albert: 2020). Within the last decade, North Korea has spent more than \$1.66 million on over 16,000 border-security cameras and 100,000 closed-circuit TV cameras (Abad-Santos: 2013). The recent developments regarding the COVID-19 pandemic allow for the DPRK government to implement even further restrictions (Burgess: 2021). Additionally, the government restricts citizens from accessing international and domestic mobile phone services and highly surveils citizens who want to contact family and friends based in other countries (Kim: 2019). Government surveillance deliberately probes into the private life of DPRK citizens in order to ascertain whether there is opposition to the regime. North Korea's constitution may insinuate that its citizens enjoy the right to privacy and its subsequent protection thereof, but in reality, this is not the case.

Two leaked media-controlling mechanisms are Red Star OS, an operating system created in the DPRK, and Woolim, a tablet unique to the DPRK, respectively (Kretchun et al: 2017). These mechanisms contribute to both surveillance and censorship, including the creation of an operating software for DPRK technologies, which can gather data on the device's owner (Grunow & Schiess: 2017). Many DPRK citizens watch foreign content via USBs and SD cards, however, if they are using a Red Star device, the government is notified immediately and will react accordingly. Due to its software, Red Star OS enables the government to additionally trace back all devices previously connected to USB and SD cards sharing illegal content (Ibid: 2017). Through Woolim tablets, the government can ensure that even if their citizens have access to USB keys or SD cards containing foreign cultural content, such as South Korean dramas or music, it would be impossible for them to read such files, as these tablets cannot automatically recognize illegal content (picture 1). Instead, the government is able to track the distribution of digital media files in order to shut down the distributors (Schiess 2017).



(picture 1. Grunow & Schiess 2017: p44)

While the DPRK's constitution claims freedom of religious belief, it does not recognize or mention freedom of thought, conscience, or ideas. For the DPRK, freedom of thought is punished without due judicial process of those who worship anything other than the Kim dynasty. Religion, in reality, is persecuted and the existence of churches just to appease international pressure (Tae: 2021). Disobedience regularly leads to the arbitrary detention of entire families in political prison camps or the sudden disappearance of detainees (PSCORE: 2013b). The lack of freedom of thought can also be seen in education, as the curriculum largely consists of state propaganda which serves no purpose other than creating generations of subservient citizens skilled only in carrying out the government's wishes (PSCORE: 2017). Article 45 of the the DPRK's Constitution (Supreme People's Assembly: 1972) denotes that universal compulsory education for the duration of twelve years in total shall be required, which is used as a tool for the government to establish the ideals of the Kim regime.

“Children are taught discipline and love for Kim, the state, and their parents. [...] They are taught that Kim is the source of everything good and that they should love, honour and obey him” (Hunter: 1999)

Furthermore, as stated in an US Commission on International Religious Freedom, the phrase “Thank you, Father Kim Il-Sung” should be the first sentence uttered by a North Korean child (USCIRF: 2013, p1). The seemingly omnipresence of the Kim family can be felt at all stages of the life of DPRK citizens. The Kim dynasty considers themselves as an infallible and righteous entity, which exudes authority and strength. In December 2020, the DPRK passed the Anti-Reactionary Thought Law, which further restricts access to foreign, especially South Korean, media and also punishes any form of public appreciation of foreign states, for example, the use of South Korean slang words or fashion trends (Mun: 2021).

The DPRK government has manipulated the digital environment to be another tool for their tyrannical governance, maintaining control over its population and even carrying out cyberattacks abroad. DPRK people live with severe censorship, inequality, and restrictions in the digital realm, isolating them from the international community and preventing the formation of civil organizations, thus continuously exacerbating the differences between the DPRK and the rest of the world.

Timeline

Date	Actions
1976	<p>International Covenant on Civil Political Rights (ICCPR) Multilateral treaty adopted by the UN General Assembly, ensuring its parties respect the civil and political rights of their citizens ratified by the DPRK in 1981.</p>
1997	<p>Withdrawal from ICCPR DPRK requested removal from the ratifying parties of the ICCPR, but the UN denied the withdrawal as all other state parties have to be in agreement.</p>
2004	<p>Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Law Revised this law to clarify legal procedures regarding torture, arrests, and detention. Evidence of public execution and abuse still exists today.</p>
2014	<p>UN Commission of Inquiry (COI) Report on human rights in DPRK discovering that the government committed crimes against humanity (including torture, imprisonment, and sexual violence). Investigators were not able to enter the DPRK to conduct research, but information was gained through the testimonies of 80 defectors and specialists.</p>
2016	<p>Seoul National Assembly in the Republic of Korea Passed the North Korean Human Rights Act, which focuses on the protection and advancement of human rights for DPRK citizens.</p>

2017	<p>UN Security Council Placed DPRK's human rights violations on its formal agenda as a threat to international security and peace.</p>
2017	<p>UN Human Rights Committee and General Assembly's Third Committee Emphasized the need for advancing action to ensure human rights are properly addressed in DPRK, making this the 14th year in a row that the UN has focused on DPRK's human rights violations.</p>
2019	<p>Universal Periodic Review (UPR) The DPRK government underwent the UPR, the Human Rights' Committee's review that considers the state's human rights records. Out of 262 recommendations made by 87 states, DPRK accepted 132, which mainly focused on treaty bodies, the development of more laws, food, health, education, and expression.</p>
2019	<p>Diplomatic Engagement Efforts Kim Jong Un met with representatives across the world for diplomacy reasons: Chinese President Xi Jinping, South Korea President Moon Jae-in, US President Donald Trump, Vietnamese President Nguyen Phu Trong, and Russian President Vladimir Putin.</p>

Evaluation of Past UN and International Actions

Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

The United Nations Human Rights Council established a Commission of Inquiry (COI) in 2014. The COI mandates the investigation of human rights violations in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to ensure full accountability for the crimes against humanity. This pertains to the fact that DPRK is still held responsible as a part of the International Covenant on Civil Political Rights (ICCPR). The report established the large range of human rights violations in DPRK, and it seeks to cooperate with the DPRK government. However, such actions have proven to be unsuccessful due to the lack of cooperation from the DPRK government (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2013).

Annual Resolutions

Since 2005, the UN has been adopting resolutions to improve the human rights abuse in DPRK. In 2020, they passed their 16th annual resolution regarding the systematic abuse of human rights. This resolution, "The Situation of Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea", reviews the human rights abuses documented in the 2014 COI (King, 2020). However, a representative of DPRK claimed that this resolution was slander to the nation, thus denying the claims of abuse. This comes from the fact that DPRK has long considered human rights to be a difference in ideologies from other nations, particularly those from the West. As a result, the most recent resolution was only able to receive hostility from DPRK, and it had no political or social impact on the DPRK government (The Korea Times, 2020)

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

Internal Parties:

State Security Department (SSD)

The State Security Department is one of the concealed institutions in North Korea. It carries out a wide range of functions, from counterintelligence to internal security functions as the ‘secret police’ to the surveillance of people. It is located in Pyongyang but has many offices spread across the nation. The SSD is one of the most relevant parties when it comes to the surveillance of the citizens due to its many responsibilities. It also monitors political attitudes, searches for anti-state criminals, and runs political prisons. The SSD also often takes action against members of the elite in DPRK due to the unique security system. Generally, SSD agents are known as political officers and they additionally monitor fellow institutes. The institute reports directly to the National Defense Commission (NDC).

Ministry of People’s Security (인민보안부)

The Ministry of People’s Security acts as the national police force of DPRK. As stated in the Public Security Regulation Law of 1992, the ministry functions to defend the sovereignty and political system of DPRK. The ministry’s tasks range from maintaining law and order to overseeing the country’s non-political prison. Like the SSD, the ministry also focuses on political surveillance. This is the most recognized force in DPRK security, since they do routine checks on travelers and police patrols. In 2014, the ministry also revealed that there is a provincial Special Mobile Police Squad under their authority that works to neutralize foreign sources of negative information on the regime.

Military Security Command (보위사령부)

The Military Security Command is the institute dedicated to counterintelligence, counterespionage, and internal security. It actively works to neutralize threats of corruption or rebellions. This includes surveillance and investigations of officials in their homes, and they have the authority to make arrests on criminal activity. The force works directly with the president too, in order to protect him physically as bodyguards. They also directly report to the National Defense Commission (NDC). It focuses on determining weeding out the possible threats to the country within the officials (Gause, 2012).

External Parties:

Republic of Korea

South Koreans have struggled to come to a clear agreement on how to approach the Democratic Republic of Korea’s human rights violations. On one hand, it is clear that their geographical neighbors are struggling due to the severe human rights violations in the nation. On the other hand, it is a difficult subject to broach considering even the government has not made its policy clear on the topic. President Moon’s administration has not been clear on the human rights issue. In 2016, the North Korean Human Rights Act came into effect, and it requires the South Korean government to implement the recommendations from the 2014 UN Commission of Inquiry (COI) report. It focuses on assisting nationals detained in DPRK and North Koreans who escaped their country. However, the act has not been implemented, even though President Moon met with Kim Jong Un multiple times in 2019. Also, the Republic of Korea has yet to create a North Korea Human Rights Foundation, and the government chose to withdraw their name from a resolution regarding human rights abuses in North Korea in 2019. The resolution had originally been co-

sponsored annually since 2008. Due to the general disagreement among the South Korean population, the Republic of Korea is not a large contributor to the work towards the human rights violations in DPRK (Johnston, 2013).

United States

The United States government is the only one in the world that imposed human-rights related sanctions on Kim Jong-un. From 2014 to 2017, the US emphasized the importance of putting DPRK's human rights violations on the United Nations Security Council's formal agenda. However, in 2018, the Security Council no longer held this discussion due to the focus on nuclear threats from Pyongyang. Despite President Trump's speeches about human rights abuses in North Korea, he did not mention the matter with Kim Jong-un at their summit in June, 2019. Afterwards, there is no sign of the US raising human rights issues. Due to the high impact of media coverage regarding DPRK's confrontation with the United States over nuclear weapons, it is difficult to spot the United States' involvement in further sanctions on human rights violations in North Korea (Lee & Hwang, 2005).

China

China has the greatest potential to be the most influential actor in DPRK. After all, China is North Korea's largest trading partner. Although China has the power to pressure North Korea on human rights through trade sanctions, it has declined to do so. Even though President Xi Jinping met with Kim Jong-un thrice in 2018, the matter has never been brought up (Roth, 2018). Also, there are North Koreans who flee to China upon escaping DPRK. Although these refugees expect to be protected under international law, the Chinese government refuses to protect refugees, despite being state parties to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 protocol. As a result, the Chinese government sends the refugees back to DPRK, and they are subject to harsh punishment that exists due to the human rights abuses. In addition, China denies permission to the UN agencies that ask to travel to DPRK through the border between China and North Korea. In 2019, President Xi Jinping met twice with Kim Jong-un, but also during these conversations the issue was never brought up (Roth, 2019).

European Union (EU)

Europe has the potential to contribute to the stability of the Korean peninsula, since several member states were once allies of North Korea during the Soviet era. The European Union's policy towards DPRK changed in 2003. From 1994 to 2003, the EU positively engaged with North Korea. There were various EU organizations that focused on DPRK human rights violations, and the EU as a whole provided economic and technological assistance. The work done by the EU helped stabilize the relationship between North and South Korea. However, after 2003, the EU cut ties with DPRK: trade ties were disengaged and diplomatic exchanges were ended. Instead, the EU has focused on increasing restrictive measures towards DPRK. The explanation for this change in policy relates to DPRK's nuclear threats, but this is not the sole reason. Namely, the European Union gave priority to maintaining common ground with the United States. Although North and South Korean officials have considered the possibility that the EU would help in the peace process, Europe seems unwilling or unable to adopt a large role in fostering peace on the Korean peninsula (Alexandrova, 2019).

Japan

Japan has passed a law known as the North Korean Human Rights Act to resolve the issue of the return of Japanese citizens who were abducted in the 1970s and 1980s and settling DPRK refugees. Japanese civil society groups focus mainly on the abductions, and their aim is to the abductees to their home country. In 2019, Japan opted out of sponsoring a key annual resolution on North Korea at the United Nations Human Rights Council, but this decision went unexplained (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs):

Non-governmental organizations have been present in DPRK since the 1990s. As of 2010, however, few NGOs are active in DPRK, and these are mainly European aid agencies. NGOs have limited success in DPRK, and this is because organizations have to accept that their aid may inadvertently end up in the hands of DPRK military groups or government groups. As a condition of their aid, NGOs ask for transparency when it comes to the delivery of said resources. However, DPRK officials have failed to meet the transparency requirement, since DPRK officials requested that aid would only be delivered through the Public Distribution System. As a result, humanitarian aid is often diverted to political means. On the other hand, there are certain forms of aid that are considered successful. Projects made to integrate more efficient and developed means, such as alternative types of farming and hospital renovations or disaster management training, have been more successful.

Between 1998 to 2000, the restrictions NGOs faced were enough to make them withdraw from DPRK. The main NGOs were Doctors Without Borders and Oxfam Novib. Although the restrictions on the NGOs' travel decreased by 2005, small areas in northeast provinces, such as North and South Pyongan and Kangwon, were ruled out for security reasons. NGOs were given little control due to their government contracts, yet there is notable improvement in their restrictions. The United States was able to provide aid in 2008. In response to the United Nations Food Programme's and the Food and Agricultural Organization's (FAO) request for aid in North Korea, the United States arranged to send food aid through five US-based NGOs to distribute the aid. However, the DPRK government ordered them to leave in March, 2009, with no explanation. The Republic of Korea cut off most of the NGO contacts with North Korea since the presidency of Lee Myung-bak in 2007. In 2010, however, the South Korean government made small donations of aid, alongside the United States. Overall, the DPRK government has strictly controlled the activities of all NGOs in the country. Transparency is impossible, since the government has denied NGO demands to monitor the distribution of aid. As a result, NGOs are unable to provide more aid in terms of political and social aspects, and they are only able to focus on basic aid like food and resources (Taylor & Manyin, 2011).

Questions That a Resolution Should Address

1. How can international actors join efforts to protect and promote the universal right to civic space for DPRK citizens, including all civil and political liberties, freedom of expression, association, and religion?
2. How can external information effectively be disseminated within DPRK society without falling under censorship by the State?
3. How can the international community monitor human rights abuses in North Korea in the context of digital media?

4. How should the regime utilise their funds under current economic sanctions and COVID-19 barriers?
5. Is surveillance of civil societies necessary for peaceful domestic and international relations?

Works Cited

Abad-Santos, A. Kim Jong-un's Horde of Spy Cameras Makes it Harder to Escape North Korea, *The Atlantic*. 2013. online: <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/01/kim-jong-uns-horde-spy-cameras-makes-it-harder-escape-north-korea/319472/> [accessed 05/02/2021]

Albert, E. Backgrounder - North Korea's Military Capabilities. *Council on Foreign Relations*. 2020

Alexandrova, I. The European Union's Policy Toward North Korea: Abandoning Engagement. *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies*. 2019. 28.1. pp 33-62

Amnesty International. Connection Denied: Restrictions on Mobile Phones and Outside Information in North Korea, *Amnesty International UK*. 2016

Bachelet, M. Statement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Dublin Platform for Human Rights Defenders 2019*, United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. 2019. online: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25092&LangID=E>

Baek, J. North Korea's Hidden Revolution. 2016. New Haven: Yale University Press

Buckingham, D. Defining Digital Literacy: What Do Young People Need to Know About Digital Media? *Medienbildung in Neuen Kulturräumen: Die Deutschsprachige Und Britische Diskussion*. 2015. pp 21-34

Burgess, M. The Truth About North Korea's Ultra-Lockdown Against Covid-19. *Wired*. 2021. online: <https://www.wired.com/story/truth-about-north-koreas-ultra-lockdown-covid-19/> [accessed 05/03/2021]

Campagna, D. Implementing the Human Right to Take Part in Cultural Life: Trends and Perspectives of Inclusive Cultural Empowerment, *Peace Human Rights Governance*. 2017. 1(2). pp 169-193

Caravel, The. The Technology of Oppression & Resistance Is Borderless. *The Caravel*. 2019

Chen, C., Ko, K. & Lee, J. Y. North Korea's Internet Strategy and its Political Implications. *Pacific Review*. 2010. 23(5). pp 649-670

Civic Space Watch. *About Civic Space*. 2021. online: <https://civicspacewatch.eu/what-is-civic-space/> [accessed 05/03/2021]

Dahlum, S., Knutsen, C. H. & Wig, T. Who Revolts? Empirically Revisiting the Social Origins of Democracy. *Journal of Politics*. 2019. 81(4). pp 1494-1499

Stent, D. A Century of Contention in South Korea: The Evolution of Contentious Politics Against Political Elites. *Asian Survey*. 2019. 59 (5). pp 889–910

European Federation of Journalists. Covid-19 Impact On Access To Information in COE Countries. *European Federation of Journalists*. 2020. online: <https://europeanjournalists.org/blog/2020/06/19/covid-19-impact-on-access-to-information-in-coe-countries/> [accessed 06/03/2020]

Fathy, N. Freedom of Expression in the Digital Age: Enhanced or Undermined? The Case of Egypt. *Journal of Cyber Policy*. 2018

Gause, Ken E. Coercion, Control, Surveillance, and Punishment: An Examination of the North Korean Police State. *Committee for Human Rights in North Korea*. 2012

Gerschewski, J. & Dukalskis, A. How the Internet Can Reinforce Authoritarian Regimes: The Case of North Korea, *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*. 2018. 19(1). pp 12–19

Grunow, F. & Schiess, N. TR17 - Exploring North Korea's Surveillance Technology, *YouTube*. 2017. online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyPft_hOU64 [accessed 06/03/2021]

Guardian, The. Myanmar's Internet Shutdown: What's Going On and Will It Crush Dissent?. *The Guardian*. 2021. online: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/feb/17/myanmars-internet-shutdown-whats-going-on-and-it-crush-dissent> [accessed 05/03/2021]

Human Rights Watch. World Report 2019: North Korea. 2019. online: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/north-korea#> [accessed 09/03/2021]

Human Rights Watch. *Japan: Stand Firm on Rights in North Korea*. 2020. online: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/02/18/japan-stand-firm-rights-north-korea> [accessed 05/03/2021]

Johnston, E. *South Korea's Response to Human Rights Abuses in North Korea: An Analysis of Policy Options*. 2013

Kim, Y. North Korea's Mobile Telecommunications and Private Transportation Services in the Kim Jong-un Era, *HRNK Insider*. 2019

King, R. *North Korea Human Rights on the UN General*. 2020. online: <https://keia.org/the-peninsula/north-korea-human-rights-on-the-un-general-assembly-agenda/> [accessed: 06/03/2021]

Kretchun, N. A Quiet Opening: North Koreans in a Changing Media Environment. *Intermedia*. 2012

Kretchun, N., Lee, C. and Tuohy, S. Compromising Connectivity. *Intermedia*. 2017

Lankov, A. Changing North Korea: An Information Campaign Can Beat the Regime. *Foreign Affairs. Council on Foreign Relations*. 2009

- Lee, H. & Hwang, J. ICT Development in North Korea: Changes and Challenges, *Information Technologies and International Development*. 2004. 2(1). pp 75–87
- Menand, L. Why Do We Care So Much About Privacy? *The New Yorker*. 2018. pp 24–29
- Mun, S. Kim Jong Un’s True Intentions Were Revealed Through The Anti-reactionary Thought Law. *DailyNK*. 2021. online: <https://www.dailynk.com/english/kim-jong-un-true-intentions-revealed-through-anti-reactionary-thought-law/> [accessed 06/03/2021]
- Nimni, E. Collective Dimensions of the Right to Take Part in Cultural Life, *United Nations Economic and Social Council*. 2008. online: <https://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr/docs/discussion/EphraimNimni.pdf> [accessed 05/03/2021]
- People for Successful COrean REunification. *Human Rights Violations in North Korea*. 2013a. online: <http://pscore.org/life-north-korea/free-resources/> [accessed 06/03/2021]
- People for Successful COrean REunification. Only the Freedom to Breathe. *Human Rights Report*. 2013b. online: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tDv_EqGz8TtoMp4u33E8crGfzxLDurMI/view [accessed 06/03/2021]
- People for Successful COrean REunification. *Forced to Hate - North Korea’s Education System*. 2017. online: <http://pscore.org/our-report-on-the-north-korean-education-system-forced-to-hate-north-koreas-education-system/> [accessed 04/03/2021]
- Piccone, T. Democracy and Digital Technology, *International Journal on Human Rights*. 2018. 15(27). pp 29–38
- Recorded Future. How North Korea Revolutionized the Internet as a Tool for Rogue Regimes. *Insikt Group*. 2020
- Robertson, P. North Korea’s Caste System – The Trouble with Songbun, *Human Rights Watch*. 2016. online: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2016/07/05/north-koreas-caste-system#> [accessed 04/03/2021]
- Romainville, C. Defining the Right to Participate in Cultural Life as a Human Right, *Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights*. 2015. 33. pp 405-436
- Roth, K. *North Korea: Events of 2018*. 2018. online: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/north-korea#> [accessed 05/03/2021]
- Roth, K. *North Korea: Events of 2019*. 2020. *Human Rights Watch*. online: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/north-korea#> [accessed 06/03/2021]
- Schiess, N. Governmental Control of Digital Media Distribution in North Korea: Surveillance and Censorship on Modern Consumer Devices. *DPRKTech*. 2017

Scott, W. Computer Science in the DPRK, *Chaos Computer Club Media Youtube Channel*. 2014. online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w703MQZcDhY> [accessed 06/03/2021]

Shahbaz, A. and Funk, A. Freedom on the Net 2019: The Crisis of Social Media. *Freedom House*. 2019. 32. online: <https://www.freedomonthenet.org/report/freedom-on-the-net/2019/the-crisis-of-social-media> [accessed 03/03/2021]

Supreme People's Assembly. DPRK Socialist Constitution. *Supreme People's Assembly*. 1972. https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Peoples_Republic_of_Korea_1998.pdf [accessed 06/03/2021]

Tae, Y. The Role of the International Community and Korean Reunification. *Corean Reunification Academy*. 2021. online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPt4bjpOAfk&t=2141s> [accessed 09/03/2021]

Taylor, M. and Mark E. *Non-Governmental Organizations' Activities in North Korea*. 2011

The Korea Times. UN passes North Korean Human Rights Resolution For 16th Consecutive Year. *The Korea Times*. 2020. online: https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2020/12/103_301031.html [accessed 09/03/2021]

UN General Assembly. *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. 1948. 217 A (III)

UN General Assembly. *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. 1966. 2200A (XXI)

UN General Assembly. *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*. 1976. Resolution 2200A (XXI)

UN General Assembly (2016) *Promotion and Protection of All Human Rights, Civil, Political, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Including the Right To Development*. Resolution A/HRC/32/L.20

United Nations General Assembly. *The Right to Privacy in the Digital Age*. 2013. Resolution 68/167

United Nations Human Rights Council. *Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea*. 2013

World Bank, The. World Development Report. *World Bank Publications*. 2020