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Defense Intelligence Reference Document

February 1994
DOD-2600-KN-94, Vol 1

North Korean Military Forces

North Korean Force Capabilities Handbook, Vol 1: National Military Overview



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(U) Key Government Officials

- President: Kim Il-song
- Chairman of the National Defense Commission: Kim Chong-il
- Vice President: Yi Chong-ok
- Vice President: Pak Song-chol
- Vice President: Kim Yong-chu
- Vice President: Kim Pyong-sik
- Premier: Kang Song-san
- Minister of Foreign Affairs: Kim Yong-nam
- Minister of the People's Armed Forces: Marshal O Chin-u
- Minister of Public Security: Vice Marshal Paek Hak-nim

(U) Key Military Officials

- Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces: Marshal Kim Chong-il
- Minister of the People's Armed Forces: Marshal O Chin-u
- Director of the General Political Affairs Bureau, Ministry of the People's Armed Forces: Marshal O Chin-u
- Chief of General Staff, the Korean People's Army: Vice Marshal Choe Kwang
- Air Force Commander: General Cho Myong-nok
- Navy Commander: Admiral Kim Il-chol

(b)(1);1.4 (c)

Type and Stability of Government

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

[redacted] Secretary General of the Korean Workers' Party (KWP), Chairman of the Central People's Committee, and Chairman of the Central Military Committee of the KWP. [redacted]

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

[redacted] Both Kims are also listed ranking first and second, respectively, among the three-member Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the KWP.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

~~(C)~~ Kim Chong-il is expected to succeed his father, Kim Il-song, as ruler of North Korea. Kim Chong-il already manages day-to-day affairs, although his father retains final control over important foreign affairs. [redacted]

Kim Chong-il's selection as successor is an unorthodox choice for a communist state. It was done to ensure that his father's policies will be continued.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

~~(C)~~ As expected in a communist state, ideology plays an important role in North Korea. Pyongyang's domestic and foreign policies, for example, are commonly explained as manifestations of *juche* (self-reliance) *sasang* (thought), a North Korean version of socialist philosophy. [redacted]

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

[redacted] By using *juche* as a multifunctional ideological concept, Kim Il-song has firmly established his leadership in North Korea by sheer political pragmatism, [redacted] by widening diplomatic activities, by neutralizing dysfunctional pressure of fraternal intervention or control from external forces, and by relentlessly attacking U.S. imperialism.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

Military and Political Alignment

[redacted]

~~(C)~~ [redacted] have enhanced North Korea's position within the Third World and buttressed its image as an independent communist state.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

External Threat and Government Counterstrategy

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

~~(S)~~ Pyongyang considers the ROK, actively supported by the United States, the prime threat to DPRK security. Pyongyang may credit combined ROK/U.S. forces in South Korea with the capability to mount a large-scale conventional and nuclear attack across the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and along the North Korean coasts. [REDACTED]

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

[REDACTED] North Korea has always made national defense and military preparedness its top priority, and it continues to be a viable military threat to South Korea.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

~~(S)~~ North Korea portrays South Korea and the United States as hostile in order to mobilize its own military and civilian sectors into a higher state of readiness. [REDACTED]

Internal Threat and Government Counterstrategy

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

[REDACTED] the North Korean regime is concerned with [REDACTED] keeping its population isolated from foreign influences, [REDACTED]

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

8/21/2015

Foreign Influence

(U) Kim Il-song has shown extreme sensitivity to any sign of foreign interference, actual or imagined, in North Korea's internal affairs. In his view, relationships among countries should be governed by the principles of complete equality; respect for territorial integrity, independence, and sovereignty; noninterference in one another's internal affairs; and fraternal assistance. (b)(1);1.4 (c)

~~(C)~~ For Pyongyang, 1990 was one of its toughest years. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] By the end of 1990, all the former East European socialist countries were reborn to emerge as newly democratic nations with market economy systems. Given North Korea's heavy economic reliance on the Soviet Union, the impact of Soviet disintegration was extremely distressing. Pyongyang had to search for new external sources of economic support to rescue its struggling economy. (b)(1);1.4 (c)

[REDACTED] One was a search for expanded economic ties in its effort to bail itself out of economic stagnation and diplomatic isolation due to its nuclear issue with the international community. The other was [REDACTED] (b)(1);1.4 (c)

Foreign Military Presence

~~(C)~~ No foreign troops are present in North Korea. Soviet troops left North Korea after the DPRK's establishment in 1948. Chinese troops left North Korea after the Korean armistice agreement in 1953. (b)(1);1.4 (c)

Military Strategy and Doctrine

Historical Evolution

[REDACTED] (b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

ideology of self-reliance.

~~(S)~~ The influence of Soviet operational art can be seen in the North Korean Army's (NKA's) emphasis on massing force,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

~~(S)~~ North Korea's military strategy is primarily concerned with an offensive against South Korea and defense against a counterattack. Pyongyang has created the most militarized peacetime society in the world today.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

~~(S)~~ Despite a North Korean public pronouncement that no lessons from DESERT SHIELD/STORM transfer to a renewed conflict on the Korean Peninsula, North Korea continues to study this modern conflict.

[REDACTED]

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

Balance on the Peninsula

~~(C)~~ Throughout the 1980s, as South Korea's economy was experiencing dramatic economic growth, North Korea concentrated on [REDACTED] its conventional military forces. The South Korean response, constrained by its more pluralist political system, did not develop significant momentum until the middle of the decade.

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

1990-95 War Preparedness Plan

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

Force Capabilities and Remaining Vulnerabilities

(b)(1),1.4 (c)

(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

~~(S)~~ Future North Korean military spending will diminish as the economy flounders, and the remaining military spending will be less effective.

(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

~~(S)~~ If current economic and political trends continue in North Korea, the overall readiness and capabilities of North Korea's forces will decline by the end of this decade.

(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

Intelligence and Security

(b)(1), 1.4 (c)

