



MUNDERES'25

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A. Welcome Letter

Letter from the Secretary General

Dear Participants, I, Bahar Serter as the Secretary-General of this conference would like to welcome you all to MUNDERES'25. It is my greatest pleasure to greet you all to the second edition of MUNDERES.

I don't think that I will be able to put into words the way I feel but since this is the second time of me writing a Secretary-General letter I can pretty much say that I am experienced. MUNDERES was the conference that was the beginning of everything and now It will be the end. Me and my team made a lot of sacrifices for this conference, for this reality which was once just a dream.

We as both the academic and the organization team have been and will be working exceedingly to provide you these three wonderful days. We have nine delightful committees in total for you to extend your vision and increase your skills. I am wishing to see you all on the 2nd of May. Don't forget to once again #rollthedice in order to begin this journey!

Secretary-General

~Bahar SERTER

Letter from the Under Secretary General

Dear Esteemed Delegates of the Historical United Nation Security Council,

As the Under Secretary General of this esteemed committee, I have the great pleasure and excitement of addressing you on this special occasion of MUNDERES'25. Please allow me to greet each and every one of you with great affection as we set out on this diplomatic and conversational journey. I am quite confident that our efforts during this conference will further cement the UNSC's reputation as one of the most prestigious and sought-after committees. You bring a multitude of experience, viewpoints, and tenacity to the table as

delegates from different countries and interests; these are necessary ingredients for deep and fruitful conversations.

We will have the chance to examine the intricacies of the Korean War and possible resolutions that take into account the worries and goals of all sides over the course of the next three days. In the middle of the discussions and agreements, I sincerely hope that we will discover not only intellectual stimulation but also a sense of respect and companionship.

The problems we are supposed to be solving are extremely serious and have broad ramifications for both global security and regional stability. I therefore implore each of you to approach our conversations with the utmost attraction and commitment. Our ability to succeed as a team will depend on your capacity to clearly state the positions of your nation, have productive conversations, and look for areas of agreement. I recognize that each of you has spent a great deal of time and energy getting ready for this conference, and I want to thank you all for your hard work and dedication. You may be sure that your efforts will not go unappreciated and that they will soon bear fruit in the days to come.

Let me conclude by thanking you all again for your participation and sincerely hoping that everyone has a positive and fulfilling experience. Let's rise to the challenges at hand as a team and work toward a more promising and tranquil future. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me before, during, and after the conference.

ggwwpru5@gmail.com

Warm regards,

Under-Secretary-General

Danyal Ok

B. Introduction to the Committee

Historical Security Council is the historical simulation of the Security Council, which is the strongest organ authorized to take legal measurements worldwide of the United Nations responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is so organized as to be able to function continuously, and a representative of each of its members must be present including the permanent countries; United States of America, the French Republic, The

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Russian Federation and the people's Republic of China, at all times at the United Nations Headquarters.

A State, which is a Member of the United Nations but not of the Security Council, may participate, without a vote, in its discussions when the Council considers that that country's interests are affected. Both Members of the United Nations and non-members, if they are parties to a dispute being considered by the Council, are invited to take part, without a vote, in the Council's discussions; the Council sets the conditions for participation by a non-member State. The Presidency of the Council rotates monthly, according to the English alphabetical listing of its member States.

The Security Council takes the lead in determining the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression. It calls upon the parties to a dispute to settle it by peaceful means and recommends methods of adjustment or terms of settlement.

Function

The United Nations Security Council was created to primarily maintain international peace and security across the world. It is also entitled to accept new members to the United Nations and accept changes to the UN charter.

Powers

The UN Security Council has the power to establish peacekeeping operations and enforce international sanctions as well as authorize military actions through the resolutions it submits. It is also the only UN body that is authorized to issue binding resolutions to its member states, meaning that all countries have to abide by the passed resolutions of the Security Council.

Structure

The Security Council consists of fifteen members, including five permanent members and ten non-permanent members, elected on a regional basis to serve a term of two years. The five permanent members can veto resolutions and clauses without giving an explanation.



C. Introduction to the Agenda Item

The Korean war began on June 25, 1950, when some 75,000 soldiers from the North Korean People's Army poured across the 38th parallel, the boundary between the Soviet-backed Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the north and the pro-Western Republic of Korea to the south. This invasion was the first military action of the Cold War. By July, American troops had entered the war on South Korea's behalf. As far as American officials were concerned, it was a war against the forces of international communism itself. After some early back-and-forth across the 38th parallel, the fighting stalled and casualties mounted with nothing to show for them. Meanwhile, American officials worked anxiously to fashion some sort of armistice with the North Koreans. The alternative, they feared, would be a wider war with Russia and China—or even, as some warned, World War III. Finally, in July 1953, the Korean War came to an end. In all, some 5 million soldiers and civilians lost their lives in what many in the U.S. refer to as “the Forgotten War” for the lack of attention it received compared to more well-known conflicts like World War I and II and the Vietnam War. The Korean peninsula remains divided today.

D. Key Terms

Korean War (1950–1953)

A conflict between North Korea (supported by China and the Soviet Union) and South Korea (supported by the United Nations, primarily the U.S.). It began when North Korea invaded the South on June 25, 1950, and ended in an armistice (not a peace treaty), leaving Korea divided along the 38th parallel.

38th Parallel

The latitude line (38° North) that roughly divided Korea into North (communist) and South (capitalist) after World War II. It became the frontline during the war and remains the border (DMZ) today.

DMZ (Demilitarized Zone)

A heavily fortified buffer zone created after the war, separating North and South Korea. It is one of the most militarized borders in the world.

Kim Il-sung

The communist leader of North Korea who initiated the invasion of South Korea in 1950. He later established a dictatorship that continues today under his descendants.

Syngman Rhee

The first president of South Korea, an anti-communist leader who sought to unify Korea under his rule. His government was backed by the U.S.

United Nations (UN) Forces

A coalition of 16 countries, led by the U.S., that fought to defend South Korea under a UN mandate (since North Korea's invasion was seen as a breach of peace).

China's Intervention (October 1950)

After UN forces pushed North Korea back near the Yalu River, China entered the war to prevent a U.S.-allied Korea on its border, leading to a massive counterattack.

MacArthur's Landing at Inchon (September 1950)

A daring amphibious invasion led by U.S. General Douglas MacArthur, cutting off North Korean forces and reversing the war's momentum in favor of the UN.

Battle of Chosin Reservoir (November–December 1950)

A brutal battle where outnumbered UN troops (mostly U.S. Marines) fought against Chinese forces in freezing conditions, managing a fighting retreat.

Stalemate & Armistice (July 27, 1953)

After years of back-and-forth fighting, the war ended in a ceasefire, not a peace treaty, leaving Korea divided. No formal peace agreement has been signed since.

Pusan Perimeter

A desperate defensive line in southeastern Korea where UN and South Korean forces held off North Korean troops before the Inchon landing turned the tide.

Truman vs. MacArthur Controversy

U.S. President Harry Truman fired General MacArthur for insubordination after he publicly advocated for expanding the war into China (including using nuclear weapons).

No Win Policy / Limited War

The U.S. fought to contain communism rather than achieve total victory, avoiding direct war with China or the USSR (fearing World War III).

POW (Prisoner of War) Controversy

Many prisoners refused repatriation after the war, especially North Korean and Chinese POWs who feared returning to communist rule.

Forgotten War

Nickname for the Korean War because it was overshadowed by World War II and the Vietnam War in U.S. public memory.

E. General Overview

Imperial Japanese rule (1910–1945)

The Empire of Japan diminished the influence of China over Korea in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–95). A decade later, after defeating Imperial Russia in the Russo-Japanese War, Japan made the Korean Empire its protectorate with the Eulsa Treaty in 1905, then annexed it with the Japan–Korea Treaty of 1910.

Many Korean nationalists fled the country. The Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea was founded in 1919 in Nationalist China. It failed to achieve international recognition, failed to unite the nationalist groups, and had a fractious relationship with its US-based founding president, Syngman Rhee.

Korea divided (1945–1949)

At the Tehran Conference in 1943 and the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the Soviet Union promised to join its allies in the Pacific War within three months of the victory in Europe. The USSR declared war on Japan and invaded Manchuria on 8 August 1945. On 10 August, Soviet forces entered northern Korea and secured most major cities in the north by 24 August. Japanese resistance was light. Having fought Japan on Korean soil, the Soviet forces were well-received by Koreans.

On 10 August in Washington, US Colonels Dean Rusk and Charles H. Bonesteel III were assigned to divide Korea into Soviet and US occupation zones and proposed the 38th

parallel as the dividing line. This was incorporated into the US General Order No. 1, which responded to the Japanese surrender on 15 August. Explaining the choice of the 38th parallel, Rusk observed, "Even though it was further north than could be realistically reached by U. S. forces in the event of Soviet disagreement ... we felt it important to include the capital of Korea in the area of responsibility of American troops". Joseph Stalin, however, maintained his wartime policy of cooperation, and on 16 August, the Red Army halted at the 38th parallel for three weeks to await the arrival of US forces.

On 7 September 1945, General Douglas MacArthur issued Proclamation No. 1 to the people of Korea, announcing US military control over Korea south of the 38th parallel and establishing English as the official language during military control. On 8 September, US Lieutenant General John R. Hodge arrived in Incheon to accept the Japanese surrender south of the 38th parallel. Appointed as military governor, Hodge directly controlled South Korea as head of the United States Army Military Government in Korea.

In December 1945, Korea was administered by a US–Soviet Union Joint Commission, as agreed at the Moscow Conference, to grant independence after a five-year trusteeship. Waiting five years for independence was unpopular among Koreans, and riots broke out. To contain them, the USAMGIK banned strikes on 8 December and outlawed the PRK Revolutionary Government and People's Committees on 12 December. Following further civilian unrest, the USAMGIK declared martial law.

Citing the inability of the Joint Commission to make progress, the US government decided to hold an election under UN auspices to create an independent Korea. The Soviet authorities and Korean communists refused to cooperate on the grounds it would not be fair, and many South Korean politicians boycotted it. The 1948 South Korean general election was held in May. The resultant South Korean government promulgated a national political constitution on 17 July and elected Syngman Rhee as president on 20 July. The Republic of Korea (South Korea) was established on 15 August 1948.

In the Soviet-Korean Zone of Occupation, the Soviets agreed to the establishment of a communist government led by Kim Il Sung. The 1948 North Korean parliamentary elections took place in August. The Soviet Union withdrew its forces in 1948 and the US in 1949.

In China, the nationalist National Revolutionary Army and the communist People's Liberation Army (PLA) helped organize Korean refugees against the Japanese military, which had also occupied parts of China. The Nationalist-backed Koreans, led by Yi Pom-Sok, fought in the Burma campaign (1941–45). The communists, led by, among others, Kim Il Sung, fought the Japanese in Korea and Manchuria. At the Cairo Conference in 1943, China, the UK, and the US decided that "in due course, Korea shall become free and independent".

Communist insurgency in South Korea (1948–1950)

By 1948, a North Korea-backed insurgency had broken out in the southern half of the peninsula. This was exacerbated by the undeclared border war between the Koreas, which saw division-level engagements and thousands of deaths on both sides. The ROK was almost entirely trained and focused on counterinsurgency, rather than conventional warfare. They were equipped and advised by a force of a few hundred American officers, who were successful in helping the ROKA to subdue guerrillas and hold its own against North Korean military (Korean People's Army, KPA) forces along the 38th parallel. Approximately 8,000 South Korean soldiers and police officers died in the insurgent war and border clashes.

“The first socialist uprising occurred without direct North Korean participation, though the guerrillas still professed support for the northern government. Beginning in April 1948 on Jeju Island, the campaign saw arrests and repression by the South Korean government in the fight against the South Korean Labor Party, resulting in 30,000 violent deaths, among them 14,373 civilians, of whom ~2,000 were killed by rebels and ~12,000 by ROK security forces. The Yeosu–Suncheon rebellion overlapped with it, as several thousand army defectors waving red flags massacred right-leaning families. This resulted in another brutal suppression by the government and between 2,976 and 3,392 deaths. By May 1948, both uprisings had been crushed.”

Insurgency reignited in the spring of 1949 when attacks by guerrillas in the mountainous regions (buttressed by army defectors and North Korean agents) increased. Insurgent activity peaked in late 1949 as the ROKA engaged so-called People's Guerrilla Units. Organized and armed by the North Korean government, and backed by 2,400 KPA commandos who had infiltrated through the border, these guerrillas launched an offensive in September aimed at undermining the South Korean government and preparing

the country for the KPA's arrival in force. This offensive failed. However, the guerrillas were now entrenched in the Taebaek-san region of the North Gyeongsang Province and the border areas of the Gangwon Province.

While the insurgency was ongoing, the ROKA and KPA engaged in battalion-sized battles along the border, starting in May 1949. Border clashes between South and North continued on 4 August 1949, when thousands of North Korean troops attacked South Korean troops occupying territory north of the 38th parallel. The 2nd and 18th ROK Infantry Regiments repulsed attacks in Kuksa-bong, and KPA troops were "completely routed". Border incidents decreased by the start of 1950.

Meanwhile, counterinsurgencies in the South Korean interior intensified; persistent operations, paired with worsening weather, denied the guerrillas sanctuary and wore away their fighting strength. North Korea responded by sending more troops to link up with insurgents and build more partisan cadres; North Korean infiltrators had reached 3,000 soldiers in 12 units by the start of 1950, but all were destroyed or scattered by the ROKA.

Prelude to war (1950)

By 1949, South Korean and US military actions had reduced indigenous communist guerrillas in the South from 5,000 to 1,000. However, Kim Il Sung believed widespread uprisings had weakened the South Korean military and that a North Korean invasion would be welcomed by much of the South Korean population. Kim began seeking Stalin's support for an invasion in March 1949, traveling to Moscow to persuade him.

Stalin initially did not think the time was right for a war in Korea. PLA forces were still embroiled in the Chinese Civil War, while US forces remained stationed in South Korea. By spring 1950, he believed that the strategic situation had changed: PLA forces under Mao Zedong had secured final victory, US forces had withdrawn from Korea, and the Soviets had detonated their first nuclear bomb, breaking the US monopoly. As the US had not directly intervened to stop the communists in China, Stalin calculated they would be even less willing to fight in Korea, which had less strategic significance. The Soviets had cracked the codes used by the US to communicate with their embassy in Moscow, and reading

dispatches convinced Stalin that Korea did not have the importance to the US that would warrant a nuclear confrontation. Stalin began a more aggressive strategy in Asia based on these developments, including promising economic and military aid to China through the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance.

In April 1950, Stalin permitted Kim to attack the government in the South, under the condition that Mao would agree to send reinforcements if needed. For Kim, this was the fulfillment of his goal to unite Korea. Stalin made it clear Soviet forces would not openly engage in combat, to avoid a direct war with the United States.

Kim met with Mao in May 1950 and differing historical interpretations of the meeting have been put forward. According to Barbara Barnouin and Yu Changgeng, Mao agreed to support Kim despite concerns of American intervention, as China desperately needed the economic and military aid promised by the Soviets. Kathryn Weathersby cites Soviet documents which said Kim secured Mao's support. Along with Mark O'Neill, she says this accelerated Kim's war preparations. Chen Jian argues Mao never seriously challenged Kim's plans and Kim had every reason to inform Stalin that he had obtained Mao's support. Citing more recent scholarship, Zhao Suisheng contends Mao did not approve of Kim's war proposal and requested verification from Stalin, who did so via a telegram. Mao accepted the decision made by Kim and Stalin to unify Korea but cautioned Kim over possible US intervention.

Soviet generals with extensive combat experience from World War II were sent to North Korea as the Soviet Advisory Group. They completed plans for attack by May and called for a skirmish to be initiated in the Ongjin Peninsula on the west coast of Korea. The North Koreans would then launch an attack to capture Seoul and encircle and destroy the ROK. The final stage would involve destroying South Korean government remnants and capturing the rest of South Korea, including the ports.

On 7 June 1950, Kim called for a Korea-wide election on 5–8 August 1950 and a consultative conference in Haeju on 15–17 June. On 11 June, the North sent three diplomats to the South as a peace overture, which Rhee rejected outright. On 21 June, Kim revised his war plan to involve a general attack across the 38th parallel, rather than a limited operation in Ongjin. Kim was concerned that South Korean agents had learned about the plans and that South Korean forces were strengthening their defenses. Stalin agreed to this change.

While these preparations were underway in the North, there were clashes along the 38th parallel, especially at Kaesong and Ongjin, many initiated by the South. The ROK was being trained by the US Korean Military Advisory Group (KMAC). On the eve of the war, KMAC commander General William Lynn Roberts voiced utmost confidence in the ROK and boasted that any North Korean invasion would merely provide "target practice". For his part, Syngman Rhee repeatedly expressed his desire to conquer the North, including when US diplomat John Foster Dulles visited Korea on 18 June.

Though some South Korean and US intelligence officers predicted an attack, similar predictions had been made before and nothing had happened. The Central Intelligence Agency noted the southward movement by the KPA but assessed this as a "defensive measure" and concluded an invasion was "unlikely". On 23 June UN observers inspected the border and did not detect that war was imminent.

Operation Pokpung

At dawn on 25 June 1950, the KPA crossed the 38th parallel behind artillery fire. It justified its assault with the claim ROK troops attacked first and that the KPA were aiming to arrest and execute the "bandit traitor Syngman Rhee". Fighting began on the strategic Ongjin Peninsula in the west. There were initial South Korean claims that the 17th Regiment had counterattacked at Haeju; some scholars argue the claimed counterattack was instead the instigating attack, and therefore that the South Koreans may have fired first. However, the report that contained the Haeju claim contained errors and outright falsehoods.

KPA forces attacked all along the 38th parallel within an hour. The KPA had a combined arms force including tanks supported by heavy artillery. The ROK had no tanks, anti-tank weapons, or heavy artillery. The South Koreans committed their forces in a piecemeal fashion, and these were routed in a few days.

On 27 June, Rhee evacuated Seoul with some of the government. At 02:00 on 28 June the ROK blew up the Hangang Bridge across the Han River in an attempt to stop the KPA. The bridge was detonated while 4,000 refugees were crossing it, and hundreds were killed. Destroying the bridge trapped many ROK units north of the river. In spite of such desperate

measures, Seoul fell that same day. Some South Korean National Assemblymen remained in Seoul when it fell, and 48 subsequently pledged allegiance to the North.

On 28 June, Rhee ordered the massacre of suspected political opponents in his own country. In five days, the ROK, which had 95,000 troops on 25 June, was down to less than 22,000 troops. In early July, when US forces arrived, what was left of the ROK was placed under US operational command of the United Nations Command

Factors in U.S. intervention

The Truman administration was unprepared for the invasion. Korea was not included in the strategic Asian Defense Perimeter outlined by United States Secretary of State Dean Acheson. Military strategists were more concerned with the security of Europe against the Soviet Union than that of East Asia. The administration was worried a war in Korea could quickly escalate without American intervention. Diplomat John Foster Dulles stated: "To sit by while Korea is overrun by unprovoked armed attack would start a disastrous chain of events leading most probably to world war."

While there was hesitance by some in the US government to get involved, considerations about Japan fed into the decision to engage on behalf of South Korea. After the fall of China to the communists, US experts saw Japan as the region's counterweight to the Soviet Union and China. While there was no US policy dealing with South Korea directly as a national interest, its proximity to Japan increased its importance. Said Kim: "The recognition that the security of Japan required a non-hostile Korea led directly to President Truman's decision to intervene ... The essential point ... is that the American response to the North Korean attack stemmed from considerations of U.S. policy toward Japan."

Another consideration was the Soviet reaction if the US intervened. The Truman administration was fearful a Korean war was a diversionary assault that would escalate to a general war in Europe once the US committed in Korea. At the same time, "there was no suggestion from anyone that the United Nations or the United States could back away from the conflict". Yugoslavia -a possible Soviet target because of the Tito-Stalin split- was vital to the defense of Italy and Greece, and the country was first on the list of the National Security Council's post-North Korea invasion list of "chief danger spots". Truman believed if aggression went unchecked, a chain reaction would start that would marginalize the UN and

encourage communist aggression elsewhere. The UN Security Council approved the use of force to help the South Koreans.

The Truman administration was uncertain whether the attack was a ploy by the Soviet Union, or just a test of US resolve. The decision to commit ground troops became viable when a communiqué was received on 27 June indicating the Soviet Union would not move against US forces in Korea. The Truman administration believed it could intervene in Korea without undermining its commitments elsewhere.

United Nations Security Council resolutions

On 25 June 1950, the United Nations Security Council unanimously condemned the North Korean invasion of South Korea with Resolution 82. The Soviet Union, a veto-wielding power, had boycotted Council meetings since January 1950, protesting Taiwan's occupation of China's permanent seat. The Security Council, on 27 June 1950, published **Resolution 83** recommending member states provide military assistance to the Republic of Korea. On 27 June President Truman ordered U.S. air and sea forces to help. On 4 July the Soviet deputy foreign minister accused the U.S. of starting armed intervention on behalf of South Korea.

The Soviet Union challenged the legitimacy of the war for several reasons. The ROK intelligence upon which **Resolution 83** was based came from US Intelligence; North Korea was not invited as a sitting temporary member of the UN, which violated UN Charter Article 32; and the fighting was beyond the Charter's scope, because the initial north–south border fighting was classed as a civil war. Because the Soviet Union was boycotting the Security Council, some legal scholars posited that deciding upon this type of action required the unanimous vote of all five permanent members.

Within days of the invasion, masses of ROK soldiers—of dubious loyalty to the Syngman Rhee regime—were retreating southwards or defecting en masse to the northern side, the KPA.

United States' response (July–August 1950)

As soon as word of the attack was received, Acheson informed Truman that the North Koreans had invaded South Korea. Truman and Acheson discussed a US invasion response

and agreed the US was obligated to act, comparing the North Korean invasion with Adolf Hitler's aggressions in the 1930s, and the mistake of appeasement must not be repeated. US industries were mobilized to supply materials, labor, capital, production facilities, and other services necessary to support the military objectives of the Korean War. Truman later explained he believed fighting the invasion was essential to the containment of communism as outlined in the National Security Council Report 68 (NSC 68):

“Communism was acting in Korea, just as Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese had ten, fifteen, and twenty years earlier. I felt certain that if South Korea was allowed to fall, Communist leaders would be emboldened to override nations closer to our own shores. If the Communists were permitted to force their way into the Republic of Korea without opposition from the free world, no small nation would have the courage to resist threat and aggression by stronger Communist neighbors.”

In August 1950, Truman and Acheson obtained the consent of Congress to appropriate \$12 billion for military action, equivalent to \$157 billion in 2024. Because of the extensive defense cuts and emphasis on building a nuclear bomber force, none of the services were able to make a robust response with conventional military strength. General Omar Bradley, Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was faced with deploying a force that was a shadow of its World War II counterpart.

Acting on Acheson's recommendation, Truman ordered MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers in Japan, to transfer matériel to the South Korean military, while giving air cover to evacuation of US nationals. Truman disagreed with advisers who recommended unilateral bombing of the North Korean forces and ordered the U.S. Seventh Fleet to protect Taiwan, whose government asked to fight in Korea. The US denied Taiwan's request for combat, lest it provoke retaliation from the PRC. Because the US had sent the Seventh Fleet to "neutralize" the Taiwan Strait, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai criticized the UN and US initiatives as "armed aggression on Chinese territory". The US supported the Kuomintang in Burma in the hope these KMT forces would harass China from the southwest, thereby diverting Chinese resources from Korea.



The drive south and Pusan (July–September 1950)

The Battle of Osan, the first significant US engagement, involved the 540-soldier Task Force Smith, a small forward element of the 24th Infantry Division flown in from Japan. On 5 July 1950, Task Force Smith attacked the KPA at Osan but without weapons capable of destroying KPA tanks. The KPA defeated the US, with 180 American casualties. The KPA progressed southwards, pushing back US forces at Pyongtaek, Chonan, and Chochiwon, forcing the 24th Division's retreat to Taejeon, which the KPA captured in the Battle of Taejeon. The 24th Division suffered 3,602 dead and wounded and 2,962 captured, including its commander, Major General William F. Dean.

By August, the KPA steadily pushed back the ROK and the Eighth United States Army southwards. The impact of the Truman administration's defense budget cutbacks was keenly felt, as US troops fought costly rearguard actions. Facing a veteran and well-led KPA force, and lacking sufficient anti-tank weapons, artillery or armor, the Americans retreated and the KPA advanced down the Peninsula. By September, UN forces were hemmed into a corner of southeast Korea, near Pusan. This 230-kilometre (140-mile) perimeter enclosed about 10% of Korea, in a line defined by the Nakdong River.

The KPA purged South Korea's intelligentsia by killing civil servants and intellectuals. On 20 August, MacArthur warned Kim Il Sung he would be held responsible for KPA atrocities.



Kim's early successes led him to predict the war would finish by the end of August. Chinese leaders were more pessimistic. To counter a possible US deployment, Zhou secured a Soviet commitment to have the Soviet Union support Chinese forces with air cover, and he deployed 260,000 soldiers along the Korean border, under the command of Gao Gang. Zhou

authorized a topographical survey of Korea and directed Lei Yingfu, Zhou's military adviser in Korea, to analyze the military situation. Lei concluded MacArthur would likely attempt a landing at Incheon. After conferring with Mao that this would be MacArthur's most likely strategy, Zhou briefed Soviet and North Korean advisers of Lei's findings, and issued orders to PLA commanders to prepare for US naval activity in the Korea Strait.

In the resulting Battle of Pusan Perimeter, UN forces withstood KPA attacks meant to capture the city at the Naktong Bulge, P'ohang-dong, and Taegu. The United States Air Force (USAF) interrupted KPA logistics with 40 daily ground support sorties, which destroyed 32 bridges, halting daytime road and rail traffic. KPA forces were forced to hide in tunnels by day and move only at night. To deny military equipment and supplies to the KPA, the USAF destroyed logistics depots, refineries, and harbors, while U.S. Navy aircraft attacked transport hubs. Consequently, the overextended KPA could not be supplied throughout the south. On 27 August, 67th Fighter Squadron aircraft mistakenly attacked facilities in Chinese territory, and the Soviet Union called the Security Council's attention to China's complaint about the incident. The US proposed a commission of India and Sweden determine what the US should pay in compensation, but the Soviets vetoed this.

Meanwhile, US garrisons in Japan continually dispatched soldiers and military supplies to reinforce defenders in the Pusan Perimeter. MacArthur went so far as to call for Japan's rearmament. Tank battalions deployed to Korea, from the port of San Francisco to the port of Pusan, the largest Korean port. By late August, the Pusan Perimeter had 500 medium tanks battle-ready. In early September 1950, UN forces outnumbered the KPA 180,000 to 100,000 soldiers.

Battle of Incheon (September 1950)

Against the rested and rearmed Pusan Perimeter defenders and their reinforcements, the KPA were undermanned and poorly supplied; unlike the UN, they lacked naval and air support. To relieve the Pusan Perimeter, MacArthur recommended an amphibious landing at Incheon, near Seoul, well over 160 km (100 mi) behind the KPA lines. On 6 July, he ordered Major General Hobart R. Gay, commander of the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division, to plan an

amphibious landing at Incheon; on 12–14 July, the 1st Cavalry Division embarked from Yokohama, Japan, to reinforce the 24th Infantry Division inside the Pusan Perimeter.

Soon after the war began, MacArthur began planning an Incheon landing, but the Pentagon opposed him. When authorized, he activated a combined US Army and Marine Corps, and ROK force. The X Corps, consisted of 40,000 troops of the 1st Marine Division, the 7th Infantry Division and around 8,600 ROK soldiers. By 15 September, the amphibious force faced few KPA defenders at Incheon: military intelligence, psychological warfare, guerrilla reconnaissance, and protracted bombardment facilitated a light battle. However, the bombardment destroyed most of Incheon.

Breakout from the Pusan Perimeter

On 16 September Eighth Army began its breakout from the Pusan Perimeter. Task Force Lynch, 3rd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, and 70th Tank Battalion units advanced through 171.2 km (106.4 mi) of KPA territory to join the 7th Infantry Division at Osan on 27 September. X Corps rapidly defeated the KPA defenders around Seoul, thus threatening to trap the main KPA force.

On 18 September, Stalin dispatched General H. M. Zakharov to advise Kim to halt his offensive around the Pusan Perimeter, and redeploy his forces to defend Seoul. Chinese

commanders were not briefed on North Korean troop numbers or operational plans. Zhou suggested the North Koreans should attempt to eliminate the UN forces at Incheon only if they had reserves of at least 100,000 men; otherwise, he advised the North Koreans to withdraw their forces north.

On 25 September, Seoul was recaptured by UN forces. US air raids caused heavy damage to the KPA, destroying most of its tanks and artillery. KPA troops in the south,



instead of effectively withdrawing north, rapidly disintegrated, leaving Pyongyang vulnerable. During the retreat, only 25,000-30,000 KPA soldiers managed to reach the KPA lines. On 27 September, Stalin convened an emergency session of the Politburo, where he condemned the incompetence of the KPA command and held Soviet military advisers responsible for the defeat.

UN forces invade North Korea (September–October 1950)

On 27 September, MacArthur received secret National Security Council Memorandum 81/1 from Truman reminding him operations north of the 38th parallel were authorized only if "at the time of such operation there was no entry into North Korea by major Soviet or Chinese Communist forces, no announcements of intended entry, nor a threat to counter our operations militarily". On 29 September, MacArthur restored the government of the Republic of Korea under Syngman Rhee. The Joint Chiefs of Staff on 27 September sent MacArthur a comprehensive directive: it stated the primary goal was the destruction of the KPA, with unification of the Peninsula under Rhee as a secondary objective "if possible"; the Joint Chiefs added this objective was dependent on whether the Chinese and Soviets would intervene, and was subject to changing conditions.

On 30 September, Zhou warned the US that China was prepared to intervene if the US crossed the 38th parallel. Zhou attempted to advise KPA commanders on how to conduct a general withdrawal by using the same tactics that allowed Chinese Communist forces to escape Nationalist encirclement campaigns in the 1930s, but KPA commanders did not use these tactics effectively. Bruce Cumings argues, however, that the KPA's rapid withdrawal was strategic, with troops melting into the mountains from where they could launch guerrilla raids on the UN forces spread out on the coasts.

By 1 October, the UN Command had driven the KPA past the 38th parallel, and RoK forces pursued the KPA northwards. MacArthur demanded the KPA's unconditional surrender. On 7 October, with UN authorization, the UN Command forces followed the ROK forces northwards. The Eighth US Army drove up western Korea and captured Pyongyang on 19 October. On 20 October, the US 187th Airborne Regiment made their first of their two combat jumps during the war at Suncheon and Sukchon. The mission was to cut the road north

going to China, preventing North Korean leaders from escaping Pyongyang, and to rescue US prisoners of war.

At month's end, UN forces held 135,000 KPA prisoners of war. As they neared the Sino-Korean border, the UN forces in the west were divided from those in the east by 80–161 km (50–100 mi) of mountainous terrain. In addition to the 135,000 captured, the KPA had suffered some 200,000 soldiers killed or wounded, for a total of 335,000 casualties since end of June 1950, and lost 313 tanks. A mere 25,000 KPA regulars retreated across the 38th parallel, as their military had collapsed. The UN forces on the peninsula numbered 229,722 combat troops (including 125,126 Americans and 82,786 South Koreans), 119,559 rear area troops, and 36,667 US Air Force personnel. MacArthur believed it necessary to extend the war into China to destroy depots supplying the North Korean effort. Truman disagreed and ordered caution at the Sino-Korean border.

China intervenes (October–December 1950)

On 3 October 1950, China attempted to warn the US, through its embassy in India, it would intervene if UN forces crossed the Yalu River. The US did not respond as policymakers in Washington, including Truman, considered it a bluff.

On 15 October Truman and MacArthur met at Wake Island. This was much publicized because of MacArthur's discourteous refusal to meet the president in the contiguous US. To Truman,

MacArthur speculated there was little risk of Chinese intervention in Korea, and the PRC's opportunity for aiding the KPA had lapsed. He believed the PRC had 300,000 soldiers in Manchuria and 100,000–125,000 at the Yalu River. He concluded that, although half of those forces might



cross south, "if the Chinese tried to get down to Pyongyang, there would be the greatest slaughter" without Soviet air force protection.

Meanwhile on 13 October, the Politburo decided China would intervene even without Soviet air support, basing its decision on a belief superior morale could defeat an enemy that had superior equipment. To that end, 200,000 Chinese People's Volunteer Army (PVA) troops crossed the Yalu into North Korea. UN aerial reconnaissance had difficulty sighting PVA units in daytime, because their march and bivouac discipline minimized detection. The PVA marched "dark-to-dark" (19:00–03:00), and aerial camouflage (concealing soldiers, pack animals, and equipment) was deployed by 05:30. Meanwhile, daylight advance parties scouted for the next bivouac site. During daylight activity or marching, soldiers remained motionless if an aircraft appeared; PVA officers were under orders to shoot security violators. Such battlefield discipline allowed a three-division army to march the 460 km (286 mi) from An-tung, Manchuria, to the combat zone in 19 days. Another division night-marched a circuitous mountain route, averaging 29 km daily for 18 days.

After secretly crossing the Yalu River on 19 October, the PVA 13th Army Group launched the First Phase Offensive on 25 October, attacking advancing UN forces near the Sino-Korean border. This decision made solely by China changed the attitude of the Soviet Union. Twelve days after PVA troops entered the war, Stalin allowed the Soviet Air Forces to provide air cover and supported more aid to China. After inflicting heavy losses on the ROK II Corps at the Battle of Onjong, the first confrontation between Chinese and US military occurred on 1 November 1950. Deep in North Korea, thousands of soldiers from the PVA 39th Army encircled and attacked the US 8th Cavalry Regiment with three-prong assaults—from the north, northwest, and west—and overran the defensive position flanks in the Battle of Unsan.

On 13 November, Mao appointed Zhou overall commander and coordinator of the war effort, with Peng Dehuai as field commander. On 25 November, on the Korean western front, the PVA 13th Army Group attacked and overran the ROK II Corps at the Battle of the Ch'ongch'on River, and then inflicted heavy losses on the US 2nd Infantry Division on the UN forces' right flank. Believing they could not hold against the PVA, the Eighth Army began to retreat, crossing the 38th parallel in mid-December.

In the east, on 27 November, the PVA 9th Army Group initiated the Battle of Chosin Reservoir. Here, the UN forces fared better: like the Eighth Army, the surprise attack forced X Corps to retreat from northeast Korea, but they were able to break out from the attempted

encirclement by the PVA and execute a successful tactical withdrawal. X Corps established a defensive perimeter at the port city of Hungnam on 11 December and evacuated by 24 December, to reinforce the depleted Eighth Army to the south. About 193 shiploads of UN forces and matériel (approximately 105,000 soldiers, 98,000 civilians, 17,500 vehicles, and 350,000 tons of supplies) were evacuated to Pusan. The SS Meredith Victory was noted for evacuating 14,000 refugees, the largest rescue operation by a single ship, even though it was designed to hold 12 passengers. Before escaping, the UN forces razed most of Hungnam, with particular attention to the port.

In early December UN forces, including the British Army's 29th Infantry Brigade, evacuated Pyongyang along with refugees. Around 4.5 million North Koreans are estimated to have fled South or elsewhere abroad. On 16 December Truman declared a national state of emergency with Proclamation No. 2914, 3 C.F.R. 99 , which remained in force until September 1978. The next day, 17 December, Kim Il Sung was deprived of the right to command of KPA by China.

Stalemate (July 1951–July 1953)

For the rest of the war, the UN and the PVA/KPA fought but exchanged little territory. Large-scale bombing of North Korea continued, and protracted armistice negotiations began on 10 July 1951 at



Kaesong in the North. On the Chinese side, Zhou directed peace talks, and Li Kenong and Qiao Guanhua headed the negotiation team. Combat continued; the goal of the UN forces was to recapture all of South Korea and avoid losing territory. The PVA and the KPA attempted similar operations and later effected military and psychological operations to test the UN Command's resolve to continue the war.

The sides constantly traded artillery fire along the front, with American-led forces possessing a large firepower advantage over Chinese-led forces. *In the last three months of 1952 the UN fired 3,553,518 field gun shells and 2,569,941 mortar shells, while the communists fired 377,782 field gun shells and 672,194 mortar shells: a 5.8:1 ratio. The communist insurgency, reinvigorated by North Korean support and scattered bands of KPA stragglers, resurged in the south.*

In the autumn of 1951, Van Fleet ordered Major General Paik Sun-yup to break the back of guerrilla activity. The UN's limited offensive (31 August – 12 November) to shorten and straighten sections of the lines, acquire better defensive terrain, and deny the enemy key vantage points, saw heavy fighting by UN forces, with I Corps and X Corps making limited tactical advances against PVA and KPA forces. The campaign resulted in approximately 60,000 casualties, including 22,000 Americans. The intense battles at Bloody Ridge, the Punchbowl and Heartbreak Ridge underscored the challenges of penetrating the Chinese "active defense." Despite PVA/KPA losses of 100,000–150,000 troops, these were not crippling, and the PVA forces remained resolute. By November, the UNC abandoned major offensive operations, and the PVA launched counterattacks with some success.

From December 1951 to March 1952, ROK security forces claimed to have killed 11,090 partisans and sympathizers and captured 9,916 more.

PVA troops suffered from deficient military equipment, logistical problems, overextended communication and supply lines, and the constant threat of UN bombers. These factors led to a rate of Chinese casualties far greater than the casualties suffered by UN troops. The situation became so serious that in November 1951 Zhou called a conference in Shenyang to discuss the PVA's logistical problems. It was decided to accelerate the construction of railways and airfields, to increase the trucks available to the army, and to improve air defense by any means possible. These commitments did little to address the problems.

In the months after the Shenyang conference, Peng went to Beijing several times to



brief Mao and Zhou about the heavy casualties and the increasing difficulty of keeping front lines supplied with basic necessities. Peng was

convinced the war would be protracted and that neither side would be able to achieve victory in the near future. On 24 February 1952, the Military Commission, presided over by Zhou, discussed the PVA's logistical problems with members of government agencies. After government representatives emphasized their inability to meet the war demands, Peng shouted: "You have this and that problem... You should go to the front and see with your own eyes what food and clothing the soldiers have! Not to speak of the casualties! For what are they giving their lives? We have no aircraft. We have only a few guns. Transports are not protected. More and more soldiers are dying of starvation. Can't you overcome some of your difficulties?" The atmosphere became so tense Zhou was forced to adjourn the conference. Zhou called a series of meetings, where it was agreed the PVA would be divided into three groups, to be dispatched to Korea in shifts; to accelerate training of pilots; to provide more anti-aircraft guns to front lines; to purchase more military equipment and ammunition from the Soviet Union; to provide the army with more food and clothing; and to transfer the responsibility of logistics to the central government.

With peace negotiations ongoing, the Chinese attempted a final offensive in the final weeks of the war to capture territory: on 10 June, 30,000 Chinese troops struck South Korean and U.S. divisions on a 13 km (8 mi) front, and on 13 July, 80,000 Chinese soldiers struck the east-central Kumsong sector, with the brunt of their attack falling on 4 South Korean divisions. The Chinese had success in penetrating South Korean lines but failed to capitalize, particularly when US forces responded with overwhelming firepower. Chinese casualties in their final major offensive (above normal wastage for the front) were about 72,000, including 25,000 killed compared to 14,000 for the UN (most were South Koreans, 1,611 were Americans).

While Chinese forces grappled with significant logistical and supply difficulties, the stalemate also stemmed from mounting frustrations within the UNC. Despite superior firepower, the war proved difficult to fight and the US public was becoming impatient of a war that was lacking a victory. By mid-1951, the stalemate had worn away Truman's public approval, and political pressures mounted on the Truman administration to seek an end to the fighting. On 29 November 1952 U.S. President-elect Dwight D. Eisenhower went to Korea to learn what might end the war. Eisenhower took office on 20 January 1953 and his administration prioritized containment over rollback and sought to reduce American involvement in the conflict, contributing to the later armistice.

Aftermath:

North Korea

As a result of the war, "North Korea had been virtually destroyed as an industrial society". After the armistice, Kim Il Sung requested Soviet economic and industrial assistance. In September 1953, the Soviet government agreed to "cancel or postpone repayment for all ... outstanding debts", and promised to grant North Korea one billion rubles in monetary aid, industrial equipment and consumer goods. Eastern European members of the Soviet Bloc also contributed with "logistical support, technical aid, medical supplies". China canceled North Korea's war debts, provided 800 million yuan, promised trade cooperation and sent in thousands of troops to rebuild damaged infrastructure. Contemporary North Korea remains underdeveloped[368] and continues to be a totalitarian dictatorship since the end of the war, with an elaborate cult of personality around the Kim dynasty.

The Korean Peninsula at night, shown in a 2017 composite photograph from NASA

Present-day North Korea follows Songun, or "military-first" policy and has the highest number of military and paramilitary personnel in the world, with 7,769,000 active, reserve and paramilitary personnel, or approximately 30% of its population. Its active-duty army of 1.28 million is the fourth largest in the world, after China, the United States and India; consisting of 4.9% of its population. North Korea possesses nuclear weapons. A 2014 UN inquiry into abuses of human rights in North Korea concluded that, "the gravity, scale and nature of these violations reveal a state that does not have any parallel in the contemporary world," with Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch holding similar views.

South Korea

Postwar recovery was different in the two Koreas. South Korea, which started from a far lower industrial base than North Korea (the latter contained 80% of Korea's heavy industry in 1945), stagnated in the first postwar decade. In 1953, South Korea and the United States signed a Mutual Defense Treaty.

South Korean anti-Americanism after the war was fueled by the presence and behavior of United States Forces Korea military personnel and U.S. support for Park's authoritarian regime, a fact still evident during the country's democratic transition in the

1980s. However, anti-Americanism has declined significantly in South Korea in recent years, from 46% favorable in 2003 to 74% favorable in 2011, making South Korea one of the most pro-U.S. countries.

A large number of mixed-race "GI babies" (offspring of U.S. and other UN soldiers and Korean women) were filling up the country's orphanages. Because Korean traditional society places significant weight on paternal family ties, bloodlines, and purity of race, children of mixed race or those without fathers are not easily accepted in South Korean society. International adoption of Korean children began in 1954.[379] The U.S. Immigration Act of 1952 legalized the naturalization of non-Blacks and non-Whites as U.S. citizens and made possible the entry of military spouses and children from South Korea. With the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, which substantially changed U.S. immigration policy toward non-Europeans, Koreans became one of the fastest-growing Asian groups in the United States.

F. Questions to be Answered

- What measures can be taken considering the current military situation to rebuild peace and stability to the region?
- How can the UNSC manage China's intervention without permitting war to expand into a broader conflict?
- What diplomatic actions can be taken to bring North Korea and South Korea to the negotiating table?
- What happens if the UN troops cross the 38th Parallel and what are some alternative strategies that could be considered?
- How should the UNSC uphold humane treatment in the dealing of Prisoners of War?
- What are the roles of neutral countries in peacekeeping and humanitarian aid activities?
- How can the UNSC balance military intervention against humanitarian issues, considering the death of the civilians and refugee crisis?
- What are the sanctions that can be applied to states which are prolonging the conflict?
- What are the mechanisms that the UNSC can put in place for a permanent peace agreement and preventing future hostilities on the Korean Peninsula?
- How can the council address domestic political instability in South Korea to facilitate stable governance during the war?

G. Further Reading

Documentary about “Korean War”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoZexC7M4hM>

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