



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on October 2, 2023

North Korea Enshrines Nukes in Constitution, Poland Signs Deal to Go Nuclear

Developing nuclear weapons is no longer merely a major national defense strategy for Communist North Korea. Rather, the hermit kingdom has opted to enshrine nuclear weapons in its constitution.

Pyongyang's nuclear force-building policy "has been made permanent as the basic law of the state, which no one is allowed to flout with anything," North Korea's authoritarian leader Kim Jong-un declared in a speech on September 27 at the country's Supreme People's Assembly (SPA).



AP Images
Kim Jong-un

State-controlled media outlet KCNA published an English translation of the [speech](#) on September 28, stating that the new constitutional provision requires Pyongyang to "deter war and protect regional and global peace by rapidly developing nuclear weapons to a higher level," Kim announced.

"This is a historic event that provided a powerful political lever for remarkably strengthening the national defense capabilities, including the nuclear force, for firmly consolidating the institutional and legal foundations for guaranteeing security and protecting national interests by relying on it," he continued.

The unanimous legislative implementation of the constitutional revision came just one year after the SPA codified Kim's nuclear weapons policy as "irreversible," including authorization for preemptive use of such arms.

North Korea has dismissed requests by South Korea and the United States to ditch its nuclear program in exchange for lifting sanctions, with Kim pledging earlier this year to "exponentially" step up warhead production. The North Korean leader has increased his country's missile tests amid escalating hostilities with Washington and Seoul.

The military partnership between the United States, South Korea, and Japan has become the "Asian version NATO, the root cause of war and aggression," Kim said. "This is just the worst actual threat, not threatening rhetoric or an imaginary entity," he continued, stating that with Washington operating under a "Cold War mentality" and staging military provocations, Pyongyang must expedite modernization of its nuclear weapons to ensure "strategic deterrence."

Depending on the "nuclear umbrella" of other countries would make North Korea vulnerable to ever-increasing "blackmail" from the United States, and the nation "would have certainly suffered a nuclear holocaust and total destruction long ago," Kim said. Instead, by weaponizing itself, Pyongyang has



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achieved a “proud reality” in which its nuclear program “enhances the national prestige and might and steers the world toward justice,” he posited.

Moreover, Kim lobbied for solidarity among nations that are “standing against the US and the West’s strategy for hegemony.” The North Korean leader visited Vladivostok earlier in September for discussions with Russian President Vladimir Putin on military collaboration between the countries. No agreements were inked during Kim’s visit, according to Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov. Besides, Kim held talks with Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu. He also inspected the Vostochny Cosmodrome and aviation plants in Russia’s Far East, and was shown various military hardware, including nuclear-capable strategic bombers.

According to North Korean outlet Voice of Korea, Kim and Shoigu explored ways of “further strengthening ... cooperation and mutual exchange between the armed forces of the two countries both in the field of defense and state security.”

On the final day of Kim’s Russian visit, South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol cautioned that Seoul and Washington would respond harshly if North Korea were to use nuclear weapons. The United States and South Korea have “reaffirmed that any nuclear attack by North Korea will be met with a swift, overwhelming and decisive response,” Yoon said in an interview with AP.

A move by the North to use nuclear weapons would “bring about the end of the regime” in Pyongyang, Yoon said.

Meanwhile in Europe, the Polish government inked a deal on September 27 with two U.S. companies to build the country’s first nuclear power plant. Formerly, Warsaw also voiced interest in joining NATO’s Nuclear Sharing Program to potentially host American nuclear weapons.

State-owned Polish utility firm Polskie Elekrownie Jadrowe (PEJ) signed a contract with Westinghouse Electric Company and Bechtel for a nuclear power plant to be set up in the northern Pomerania region. Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki and U.S. Ambassador Mark Brzezinski were among the officials attending the ceremony in Warsaw.

“The only clean, stable energy source that is technologically proven and verified in terms of safety is nuclear energy, which is having its big day today,” the prime minister said at the ceremony.

Based on the contract, the two American companies will set up three nuclear reactors and train local personnel within 18 months. A statement released by Westinghouse read that the first AP1000 reactor is slated to attain commercial operation in 2033.

Anna Lukaszewska-Trzeciakowska, government plenipotentiary for strategic energy infrastructure, lauded the project as able to “fundamentally rebuild the Polish energy mix.”

Ambassador Brzezinski declared that “this is not just a commercial venture” but part of an attempt to transform Poland into a “hub for civil nuclear technology deployment.”

Westinghouse CEO Patrick Fragman articulated hope that the effort “will be a model for other countries that seek decarbonization and energy security.”

An AP1000 reactor presently produces power for the U.S. state of Georgia, while another is being readied for commercial operations. Four reactors of this type are also active in China, with six more under construction. In Europe, Bulgaria has selected AP1000 technology for its new reactor program, Westinghouse disclosed.



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In June, Polish Prime Minister Morawiecki told reporters that his country wanted to become part of NATO's Nuclear Sharing Program, which allows the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons on the territory of other nations.

Launched in 2009, the scheme has witnessed U.S. B61 nuclear bombs arrive in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Türkiye. Russian estimates indicate that 150 such bombs were mobilized across Europe as of April 2022.

Warsaw cited Moscow's decision to station its own tactical nuclear arms in neighboring Belarus as the reason behind its appeal to NATO.



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