

# North Korea 'will not use nuclear weapons' unless threatened

3 minutes ago

From the section

[Asia](#)



Image copyright

Reuters

Image caption

North Korea's leader said his country would act responsibly

## North Korea

**The leader of North Korea has said the country will not use nuclear weapons unless its sovereignty is threatened, state media in the country report.**

North Korea first tested nuclear weapons in 2006, after withdrawing from an international treaty.

It has made repeated threats of nuclear strikes against South Korea and the US.

But Kim Jong-un reportedly told the Workers' Party Congress in Pyongyang that he is willing to normalise ties with previously hostile countries.

A BBC correspondent in North Korea says Mr Kim tends to send mixed messages and movement observed at the country's nuclear site is consistent with preparations for another nuclear test.

State media quoted Mr Kim as saying there should be more talks with South Korea to build trust and understanding.

And he said the country would "faithfully fulfil its obligation for non-proliferation and strive for global denuclearisation".

The meeting is the first congress of North Korea's ruling party since 1980.

Mr Kim is the supreme leader of North Korea.

The KCNA news agency reported him as saying: "As a responsible nuclear weapons state, our Republic will not use a nuclear weapon unless its sovereignty is encroached upon by any aggressive hostile forces with nukes."

He said the government would "improve and normalise the relations with those countries which respect the sovereignty of the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) and are friendly towards it, though they had been hostile toward it in the past".

North Korea withdrew from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty in 2003 and started testing nuclear weapons in 2006.

International sanctions on the country were tightened in March this year after it claimed to have tested a hydrogen bomb and launched a missile into space.

They include export bans on materials used in nuclear and military production as well as restrictions on luxury goods and banking.

## North Korea second mid-range missile test fails, says South

32 minutes ago

From the section

[Asia](#)



Image copyright

KCNA / EPA

Image caption

North Korea is thought to have used the Musudan missile, pictured here in a 2010 file photo, in the failed launch

**North Korea has test fired a mid-range ballistic missile which crashed a few seconds after launch, say South Korean military officials.**

It is thought to be the second test of the North's new Musudan missile. An attempt earlier this month also failed.

The tests come amid a recent ramp-up in weapons activity as the country prepares for a **rare party congress**.

Reports suggest it is planning a fifth nuclear test, despite condemnation of its last test in January.

South Korean officials said the mid-range missile launch took place early Thursday morning near the eastern coastal city of Wonsan but the missile "crashed a few seconds later" in the coastal area, reported Yonhap news agency.

**Dealing with the North: Carrots or sticks?**

**How advanced is North Korea's nuclear programme?**

**How potent are the threats?**

**What did each of the North's nuclear tests achieve?**



The incident was captured by a US surveillance satellite.

The Musudan missiles are said to be able to travel up to 4,000km (2,485 miles), within the range of US territories in the Pacific.

Stephen Evans, BBC News, Korea Correspondent



Image copyright  
KCNA

Image caption

Eye on the prize: Kim Jong-un is believed to be ramping up weapons activity for next week's party congress

No confirmation of the attempt or the failure has come from North Korea, but sources in South Korea say that the movement of two so-called Musudan missiles, mounted on trucks, was detected earlier in the month.

One was launched two weeks ago and tracked but failed to go far. The same has now happened to the second, according to South Korea.

Kim Jong-un is building up to a big event in just over a week, a rare meeting of the ruling Workers' Party in Pyongyang. He has trumpeted a series of announcements about progress towards having a nuclear-tipped missile capable of striking Washington. Failed launches indicate that the reality may not match the rhetoric.

All the same, they indicate determination. A fifth nuclear test coinciding with the congress would not be a surprise.

On Saturday, North Korea's foreign minister Ri Yong-su suggested that it would suspend nuclear tests if the US ended its annual military exercises with the South.

But US President Barack Obama dismissed the proposal, saying it was not serious and that North Korea would "have to do better than that".



Image copyright  
KCNA

Image caption

North Korea released a picture on Sunday of an alleged submarine missile test

Strengthened international sanctions were placed on North Korea after it tested what it claimed was a hydrogen bomb and launched a long-range missile.

Over the weekend it also claimed it fired a submarine ballistic missile.

Observers have speculated that Pyongyang is boosting the development of its weapons programs ahead of its political conference aimed at solidifying the power of its leader Kim Jong-un.

The North announced this week that the congress, which was last held in 1980, would take place on 6 May.

# We can wipe out nuclear North Korea, warns Obama

By David Blair analysis

5:42 PM Wednesday Apr 27, 2016



A TV news programme shows an image published in North Korea's Rodong Sinmun newspaper of a ballistic missile that the North claimed to have launched from a submarine. Photo / AP

US President Barack Obama delivered a stern warning to North Korea, reminding its "erratic" and "irresponsible" leader that America's nuclear arsenal could "destroy" his country.

Kim Jong Un, the North Korean dictator, claimed to have tested a submarine-launched missile last weekend.

A photograph showed the weapon flying out of the sea, although there was no independent confirmation that it had been fired from a submarine, as opposed to a sub-surface platform.

But North Korea already has between six and eight nuclear warheads that could be mounted on a missile.

If the regime does perfect a submarine-launched system then it would, in theory, be able to launch a nuclear attack on the US mainland.

This would require a submarine being able to sail within missile range of America.

Obama gave warning of the possible consequences. "We could, obviously, destroy North Korea with our arsenals," he told CBS News. "But aside from the humanitarian costs of that, they are right next door to our vital ally, [South] Korea."

He said that America was improving its own missile defences.

"One of the things that we have been doing is spending a lot more time positioning our missile defence systems, so that even as we try to resolve the underlying problem of nuclear development inside of North Korea, we're also setting up a shield that can at least block the relatively low-level threats that they're posing right now," he said.

Kim, who inherited the leadership of North Korea from his father in 2011, had shown himself to be "irresponsible" and "erratic", said Obama.

North Korea is believed to possess only one Sinpo-class submarine capable of launching a missile.

It would be no match for the nuclear-powered attack submarines of the US Navy.

More threatening for America is North Korea's continued development of the Taepodong-2 intercontinental ballistic missile. Once perfected, this weapon could be used to conduct a nuclear strike on the US mainland from North Korean soil.

America has responded to the build-up of Kim's nuclear arsenal by opening formal talks with South Korea - the country most directly threatened - on the deployment of advanced missile defences.

The Terminal High Altitude Area Defence System (THAAD) would offer the surest protection against its neighbour, which has run four nuclear tests.

But any deployment of the missile shield in South Korea would also change the military balance in East Asia. China adamantly opposes any introduction of missile defences in the region, fearing this would reduce the potency of its own nuclear deterrent.

America is using the possible arrival of THAAD as a way of placing pressure on China to curb North Korea's ambitions. Kim's regime is almost completely dependent on Chinese aid.

China has already sent signals of exasperation with North Korea, criticising the nuclear tests and allowing the passage of United Nations Resolution 2270, which imposed tougher sanctions on Mr Kim's regime last month.

- [Daily Telegraph UK](#)

## North Korea 'will halt' nuclear tests if US stops S Korea exercises

9 minutes ago

From the section

Asia

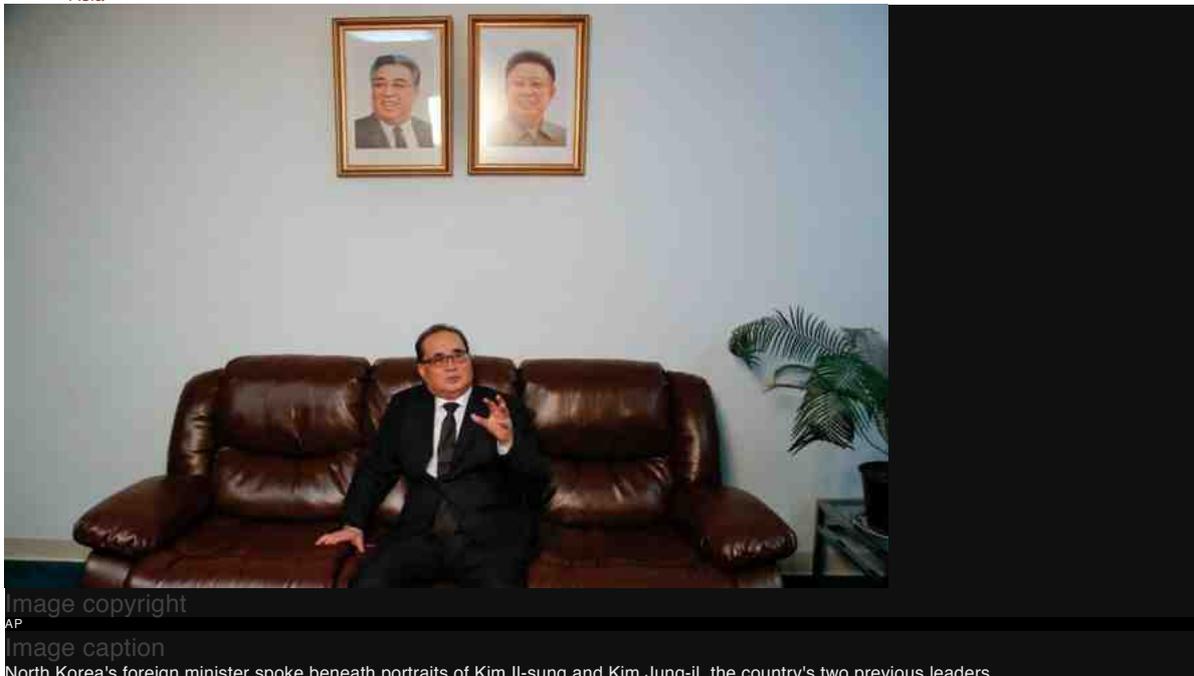


image copyright

AP

image caption

North Korea's foreign minister spoke beneath portraits of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jung-il, the country's two previous leaders

**North Korea has said it will suspend its nuclear tests if the US stops its annual military exercises with South Korea.**

Foreign minister Ri Su-yong also told the Associated Press news agency that his country would not be cowed by international sanctions.

A US official has defended the drills as a sign of commitment to South Korea.

Meanwhile, Pyongyang said Saturday's **submarine-launched ballistic missile test** was a "great success".

"It fully confirmed and reinforced the reliability of the Korean-style underwater launching system and perfectly met all technical requirements for carrying out... underwater attack operation," the North Korean news agency KCNA said. It added that the test gave the country "one more means for powerful nuclear attack". North Korea is banned from nuclear tests and activities that use ballistic missile technology under UN sanctions dating back to 2006.

Earlier, Ri Su-yong defended his country's right to have a nuclear deterrent and said the US drove North Korea to develop such weapons as an act of self-defence.

He suggested that the suspension of the military drills could open the door to talks and reduced tensions.

"If we continue on this path of confrontation, this will lead to very catastrophic results, not only for the two countries but for the whole entire world as well," **he told AP.**

"Stop the nuclear war exercises in the Korean Peninsula, then we should also cease our nuclear tests."



Image copyright  
AFP

Image caption

Saturday's test comes ahead of a party congress meant to cement leader Kim Jong-un's (right) grip on power

It was a rare interview by a top North Korean official with a foreign media outlet. The conversation took place in the country's diplomatic mission at the UN, the agency said.

An unnamed US official quoted by AP defended the drills in South Korea as demonstrating Washington's commitment to its alliance with Seoul.

The US has insisted the North give up its nuclear weapons programme first before any negotiations and has ignored similar proposals in the past, according to the agency.

Ri Su-yong also said sanctions would not sway his country: "If they believe they can actually frustrate us with sanctions, they are totally mistaken.

"The more pressure you put on to something, the more emotionally you react to stand up against it. And this is important for the American policymakers to be aware of."

The interview came hours after North Korea said it launched a ballistic missile from a submarine, a type of missile hard to detect.

Some experts, however, think the North has fired missiles from submerged platforms, but not submarines.

North Korea has so far **conducted four nuclear tests** - the first one in October 2006 and the latest in January this year.

The UN Security Council responded to the latter by imposing **its strongest sanctions to date** over the North's nuclear weapons programme.

Last month North Korea said it had developed nuclear warheads **small enough to fit on ballistic missiles**, although experts cast doubt on the claims.

Analysts believe the North may be gearing up for a fifth test as a show of strength ahead of the North Korean Workers' Party Congress in early May, the first such meeting since 1980.

## North Korea launched offshore ballistic missile, says the South

The device reportedly flew for nearly 20 miles and was deployed from a submarine, in clear breach of UN sanctions



File footage of a missile launch conducted by North Korea being watched at Seoul train station on Saturday, 23 April. Photograph: Lee Jin-man/AP Photo  
Reuters

Saturday 23 April 2016 18.20 BST Last modified on Saturday 23 April 2016 18.49 BST

North Korea has fired a submarine-launched ballistic missile off its east coast, [South Korea](#) has said.

The north fired the missile to the north-east from an area off its east coast at about 6.30pm (09.30 GMT) on Saturday, the south's office of the joint chiefs of staff said.

The announcement comes during concerns that the isolated state might conduct a nuclear test or a missile launch ahead of a ruling party meeting in May.

North Korea will hold a congress of its ruling Workers' party in early May for the first time in 36 years, at which its leader, [Kim Jong-un](#), is expected to say the country is a strong military power and a nuclear state.

The missile flew for about 30 km (18 miles), a South Korean defence ministry official said, adding its military was trying to determine whether the launch may have been a failure for unspecified reasons.

South Korea's Yonhap news agency said the missile flew "for a few minutes", citing a government source.

The US State Department in Washington said it was aware of reports the north had launched what appeared to be a ballistic missile.

"Launches using ballistic missile technology are a clear violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions," said State Department spokesman John Kirby.

It first attempted a launch of the submarine-based missile last year and was seen to be in the early stages of developing such a weapons system, which could pose a new threat to its neighbours and the United States if it is perfected.

However, follow-up test launches were believed to have fallen short of the north's expectations as its state media footage appeared to have been edited to fake success, according to experts who have seen the visuals.

South Korea's military has said it is on high alert over the possibility that the isolated North could conduct its fifth nuclear test "at any time" in defiance of UN sanctions after setting off what it said was a hydrogen device in January.

[North Korea's nuclear test cannot be written off as mere folly](#)

Satellite images show that North Korea may have resumed tunnel excavation at its main nuclear test site, which is similar to activity seen before the January test, a US [North Korea](#) monitoring website reported on Wednesday.

South Korea and the US, as well as experts, believe the north is working to develop a submarine-launched ballistic missile system and an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) putting the mainland United States within range.

North Korea is banned from nuclear tests and activities that use ballistic missile technology under UN sanctions dating back to 2006 and most recently adopted in March but it has pushed ahead with work to miniaturise a nuclear warhead and develop an ICBM.

A senior US official said this week that North Korea should take a lesson from Iran, which has agreed to roll back its nuclear programme in an agreement with western powers in return for lifting of major sanctions but the north has shown no sign of entering into such a pact.

## North Korea missile test fails, says South

45 minutes ago

From the section

[Asia](#)



Image copyright

EPA/KCNA

Image caption

North Korea has publically displayed its Musudan medium-range missile before, as seen in this 2010 file photo

**North Korea conducted a missile test off its east coast on Friday morning, but the launch appears to have failed, say US and South Korean officials.**

The rocket has not yet been identified but is suspected to have been a previously untested "Musudan" medium-range ballistic missile.

The launch coincided with the birthday of North Korea's founding leader, Kim Il-sung.

It also comes amid particularly high tension on the Korean peninsula.



Image copyright

Digital Globe

Image caption

The missile is named after the Musudan village in the northeast, where a launchpad is sited

South Korea's Yonhap national news agency quoted government sources as saying that the missile was a type of intermediate-range ballistic missile known as a Musudan, also called the BM-25.

North Korean forces were seen recently moving two such missiles.

**The report** said it would be the North's first Musudan test, and that it may have at least 50 more.

The Musudan is named after the village in North Korea's northeast where a launch pad is sited.

It has a range of about 3,000 km (1,800 miles), which extends to the US Army base on the Pacific island of Guam, but not as far as the mainland US.

The US said it had tracked the latest launch, but could also not confirm details,

"We call again on North Korea to refrain from actions and rhetoric that further raise tensions in the region and focus instead on taking concrete steps toward fulfilling its international commitments and obligations," a State Department official said.

China also criticised what it called "the latest in a string of sabre-rattling that, if unchecked, will lead the country to nowhere," according to the official Xinhua news agency.

The BBC's Stephen Evans in Seoul says that even though it failed, the test illustrates the determination of current leader Kim Jong-un to get the ability to strike the United States, but also the North's technological limitations.

The North has made a series of threats against the South and the US since the UN imposed some of its toughest ever sanctions on the country.

The move was a response to the North's fourth nuclear test in January and its launching of a satellite in February, both of which broke existing sanctions.

In March, North Korea said it had **developed nuclear warheads** small enough to fit on ballistic missiles. However, experts cast doubt on the claims.

The birthday of North Korea's founder - Mr Kim's grandfather - is significant. Four years ago, the North tried to celebrate it with a similar missile launch, but that, too failed.

### North Korea's rocket launches



Image copyright

KCNA

February 2016: Launch of rocket **reportedly carrying satellite**

May 2015: North Korea announces it has **successfully tested a submarine-launched missile** for the first time, but scepticism is then poured on the claim

Dec 2012: North Korea launches three-stage rocket, says it successfully put a satellite into orbit; US defence officials confirm object in orbit

Apr 2012: Three-stage rocket explodes just after take-off, falls into sea

Apr 2009: Three-stage rocket launched; North Korea says it was a success, US says it failed and fell into the sea

Jul 2006: North Korea test-fires a long-range Taepodong-2 missile; US said it failed shortly after take-off



## 'Possible' N Korea has developed nuclear technology

8 hours ago

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-35922817>

Respected defence analysts at Jane's say they think it is possible North Korea has a miniature device required to launch an inter-continental nuclear weapon.

The country wants to develop technology to create a small nuclear device that can exit the atmosphere, and successfully re-enter and detonate its cargo almost anywhere in the world.

Richard Watson reports.