

Year of Victory for the DPRK

In 2023 the Democratic People's Republic of Korea took another huge step forward towards the goal of developing itself into a powerful socialist country.

Asymmetry, Desperate Attempts

The “sole superpower in the world” seems to be losing strength in tackling the DPRK. Even by dragging Western countries and all other vassal forces into the bilateral confrontation, the United States has failed to turn the tide.

In 2023, quite unlike previous years, the joint military exercises staged by the US-led forces in the Korean peninsula and the surrounding region continued for much of the year.

It will not be necessary to name them one by one and go into details about their scales, but what is noteworthy is the fact that American nuclear aircraft carriers and strategic nuclear bombers showed up each time. Obviously, this sabre-rattling is designed to deter the DPRK from carrying on its nuclear programme and concentrating resources on economic construction.

The year is characterized by the attempt to form a new military bloc in the region around the Korean peninsula. The Asian version of NATO is taking shape, with the United States, Japan and south Korea colluding to step up the establishment of a tripartite military alliance. NATO vessels appeared near the peninsula. It is self-evident that all these manoeuvres, which purport to ensure closer ties among the allies, will disrupt the balance of forces in the region and, ultimately, invite arms race and war.

The maliciousness of the United States went beyond meddling in the DPRK's internal affairs. On the international arena, the United States often blamed the latter for sticking to its programme for self-defence capability, while taking issue with its human rights situation, diplomatic ties and constitutional changes.

The US-led forces went to unheard-of lengths to hinder the DPRK's economic development. According to a publication of the DPRK, with UN sanctions excluded, the United States imposed separate sanctions against this socialist country on more than 460 occasions from 2000. Such sanctions continued over the whole course of the year 2023.

In short, the year saw the United States and its vassal forces going to extremes in trying to check the DPRK's advance for building a powerful socialist nation. In view of the fact that the DPRK maintains a tough approach towards its opponents and its people have a thoroughgoing spirit of independence, it is evident that the hostile forces' ultimate aim is to deprive this socialist country of its sovereignty and its rights to independent development and existence.

Which Country Has the Initiative?

In 2023 the DPRK, unperturbed by the hostile forces' sanctions and other vicious manoeuvres, made notable progress militarily, economically and diplomatically. Dogs bark, but the caravans move on, as the American proverb goes.

First, the DPRK achieved a leap forward in consolidating its defence capability, even though the US often found fault with its legitimate right to self-defence. It developed new means of nuclear strike and strategic weapons, including ICBM *Hwasongpho-18*, nuclear unmanned underwater attack boat *Haeil*, strategic cruise missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, strategic reconnaissance drone, multi-purpose attack drone, tactical nuclear submarine and reconnaissance satellite. All these constitute the DPRK's reply to the US's mud-slinging campaign and deployment of nuclear assets near the Korean peninsula.

Second, despite the harsh sanctions by the hostile forces and the difficult conditions it faced, the DPRK achieved the 12 economic development goals it had set for the year: 103 percent of cereals, 100 percent of electric power, coal and nitrogen fertilizer, 102 percent of rolled steel, 131 percent of nonferrous metals, 109 percent of logs, 101 percent of cement and ordinary cloth, 105 percent of marine products, 106 percent of railway freight transport and 109 percent of houses under construction.

And the overall economy witnessed clear production growth, including 220 percent of motors, 208 percent of transformers, 121 percent of bearings, 140 percent of electric zinc, 121 percent of lead, 113 percent of paper, 110 percent of salt, 109 percent of cosmetics, 100 percent of sheet glass and 104 percent of magnesia clinker.

Countless are the new factories and production lines fed by domestically

available materials and fuels, for example, the energy-saving oxygen heat blast furnace at the Kim Chaek Iron and Steel Complex. Of special note is the fact that the country's economic potential grew remarkably as a result of all its economic branches carrying out in the main the strategy of readjustment and reinforcement set forth by the Eighth Congress of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea. The metallurgical and chemical industries, the buttresses of the economy, made huge strides forward.

The sector of agriculture solidified its material and technical foundations through the manufacturing of farming machines and readjustment of the irrigation system, etc. With housing construction going full steam ahead across the country, the news of people moving into new houses hit the headlines throughout the year.

These economic achievements portend still better transformations for the year 2024. It is as clear as daylight that the consolidated economic foundations and the soaring spirit of citizens will pay dividends later on.

Third, the DPRK strengthened its relations of friendship and cooperation with other countries, foiling the US-led forces' bid to bring international pressure to bear upon it.

To cite an example, China and Russia sent high-level delegations to the DPRK for the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of its victory in the Korean war (1950-1953). And General Secretary Kim Jong Un's Russia tour set up a new milestone in the bilateral relations. It was of historical significance in frustrating the imperialists' military threat, provocation, highhandedness and tyranny aimed at undermining the independence, progress and peaceful life of humankind, and also in defending the DPRK's sovereignty and interests, international justice, peace and security in the region and beyond.

Given these developments in 2023, anyone can guess which country will win in the ongoing confrontation.



A successful firing drill of ICBM *Hwasongpho-18* in December 2023



The DPRK's reconnaissance satellite *Malligyong-1* blasts off in November 2023.



A new model of energy-saving oxygen heat blast furnace is switched on at the Kim Chaek Iron and Steel Complex



High-performance farming machines have been supplied to the countryside, contributing to solidifying the material and technical foundations of the rural economy.



The agricultural sector overfulfilled the grain production plan.



With housing construction going full steam ahead in both urban and rural areas, the news of people moving into new houses hit the headlines throughout the year.



The exhibition *Light Industry Development-2023* showcases how rapidly the country's light industry is progressing and inspires the visitors with confidence in a bright future.