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THE 4TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE 8TH CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE WORKERS' PARTY OF KOREA

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THE 4TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE 8TH CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE WORKERS' PARTY OF KOREA

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The 4th Plenary Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) was held in Pyongyang from 27 to 31 December 2021. This paper provides a description of the Central Committee and its mandate, key takeaways from the meeting and concluding observations.

SUMMARY

The official report on the 4th Plenary Meeting in December 2021 demonstrates the leadership's intention to prepare the country for a prolonged period of sanctions and pandemic restrictions, and its determination to endure the hardship for an extended period of time. To achieve those goals, Kim Jong Un has been promoting an import substitution policy with a view to decreasing the country's reliance on foreign trade and expanding its domestic market. Declaring 2021 "a year of great victory", he placed particular importance on securing of food and residences for the people.

Kim Jong Un also called for enhancing the country's capabilities to deal with natural hazards. To this end, he reiterated the importance of the "people-first" and "our-state-first" principles to facilitate mass mobilization in times of crisis.

He also signaled his intention to continue to strengthen national defense capabilities – both deterrence and war-fighting capabilities – giving no indication of abandoning the country's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. This is consistent with his speech in January 2021, in which he described the DPRK's nuclear weapons programme as non-negotiable.¹ DPRK media coverage of this meeting provides no indication that the leadership expressed any interest in, or expectation of, the possible resumption of negotiations with the United States or the Republic of Korea.

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I. INTRODUCTION: THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND ITS PLENARY MEETINGS

The 4th Plenary Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) was held in Pyongyang from 27 to 31 December 2021. According to the rules of the WPK,² the Central Committee is the principal decision-making body of the WPK, and its Plenary Meetings are convened to discuss and take decisions on issues of importance to the WPK.

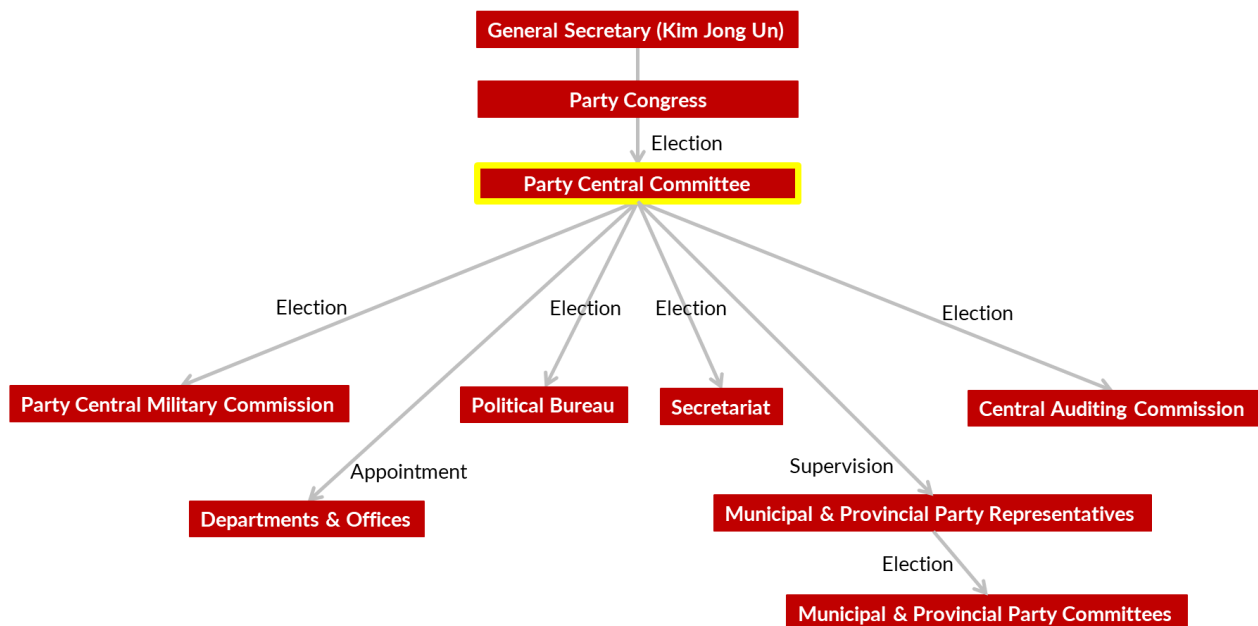
The Central Committee, which is elected at a Party Congress convened generally once every five years, is the Party's highest organ (see Figure 1). The Central Committee directs the work of the WPK between the Congresses, organizes and supervises all of the Party's projects and manages the Party's finances.³

The WPK rules authorize the Central Committee to convene a Plenary Meeting at least once a year.⁴ According to the Party's

rules, which were revised most recently in January 2021, the mandate of the Plenary Meetings includes the following:⁶

- Discussing and making decisions about issues important for the WPK, including policies, work plans, budgets and organizational affairs;
- Electing members and alternate members of the Political Bureau and its Presidium, the Central Military Commission, the Central Auditing Commission and secretaries of the Central Committee;
- Organizing the Secretariat of the Central Committee;
- Appointing directors of the departments and offices of the Central Committee; and
- Supervising the municipal and provincial party representatives.

Figure 1. The WPK's Organs (as of 29 June 2021)⁵



The Party Congress has been held 8 times since 1946 (Figure 2).⁷ Between November 1980 and April 2016, no Party Congress was held.⁸

During each Congress, a Central Committee was elected, which resulted in the formation of the 1st through 8th Central Committees.

The incumbent 8th Central Committee was elected in January 2021.

In 2021, the 8th Central Committee held four Plenary Meetings: the 1st on 10 January; the 2nd from 8 to 11 February; the 3rd from 15 to 18 June; and the 4th from 27 to 31 December.

Figure 2. Dates of WPK's Party Congresses

Plenary Meeting	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	8 th
Date	August 1946	March 1948	April 1956	September 1961	November 1970	October 1980	May 2016	January 2021

II. KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE 4TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE 8TH CENTRAL COMMITTEE

During the 4th Plenary Meeting in December 2021, the Central Committee discussed six agenda items.⁹ DPRK media reported in detail on the speech by Kim Jong Un with respect to two of those items: the first agenda item, “On the review of the execution of major Party and state policies in 2021 and work plan for 2022”, and the third agenda item, “On the immediate tasks for the correct solution of the socialist rural question in our country”.¹⁰ Not much detail was published with respect to the other four agenda items.

As for the first agenda item, Kim Jong Un reported on the status of the implementation of the first year of the Party’s five-year national economic development plan, which was adopted in January 2021. He also presented the work plan for 2022, which was adopted by the Plenary Meeting.

In connection with the third agenda item, Kim focused exclusively on the goals and implementation of the Party’s “rural development strategy” which aims at modernizing rural areas and industries, especially agricultural and other sectors relevant to the provision of foods for the people.

The following offers key takeaways from Kim’s speech.

A. Emphasis on “victory”: change in tone of Kim Jong Un’s speech

Insert text here: In his December 2021 speech, Kim Jong Un referred to 2021 as “a year of great victory”, praising the efforts of the Party and the people for having worked hard to achieve the goals set forth in the first year of the five-year plan. This statement is in contrast with his previous speech during the WPK Congress in January 2021 in which he acknowledged the “the worst conditions and difficulties” for the DPRK due to the

pandemic, natural disasters and international sanctions against the country.¹¹ At that time, he even stated that, “The current external environment of our revolution is still grim and acute.” These words were not used in his December 2021 speech, the tone of which conveyed a more positive message.

B. The Party’s internal problems: improvement in 2021?

In January 2021 speech, Kim Jong Un stressed that the Party must overcome its organizational problems, such as lack of discipline, abuse of power, bureaucracy, corruption, incompetence, irregularities and irrational work. Consistently, the 2021-2025 plan approved in January 2021 reflected policies aimed at strengthening discipline within the Party and tightening control over the influx of foreign-sourced information which could destabilize the DPRK regime.¹²

During his speech in December 2021, references to these institutional problems have significantly diminished. This change suggests a view by Kim Jong Un that these problems were under control as a consequence of his order to tighten the Party’s discipline and enhance the efficiency of the Party’s work.

However, he still called on the Party to wage “a major ideological battle against formalism in Party work” and to “steadily improve the Party’s work”. He also ordered the Party to “positively” conduct “the struggle against anti-socialist and non-socialist practices in the entire Party and the whole country and society” to ensure the social order and people’s safety. The reference to “anti-socialist and non-socialist practices” indicates his ongoing concerns about institutional problems within the Party itself and in society in general (possibly referring to business activities in unofficial markets in the country).

This suggests that the WPK and the government are likely to continue to intensify crackdowns on business activities that are deemed to be “illegal,” as well as on business practices associated with corruption, “irregularities” or “incompetence.”

C. The “people’s standard of living” and food insecurity: persistent concerns

In his speech in December 2021, Kim Jong Un repeatedly emphasized the importance to the Party of achieving the goal of stabilizing and improving the “people’s standard of living”.¹³ This was set as an unwavering goal for 2022 for the Party and for all economic sectors.

This goal is based on the “people-first” principle which was embedded in the WPK rules during the 8th Party Congress in January 2021.¹⁴ Reportedly, when the rules were revised in January 2021, the “people-first” principle replaced “military-first politics” (songun politics) which had been used as a guiding ideology by Kim’s father Kim Jong Il, who prioritized the Korean People’s Army over the people.¹⁵

Officially, the “people-first” principle is intended to reinforce the concept of the Party’s integration with the entire population of the country. It is also designed to prevent alienation by the people from the Party and the Government. It dictates that the demands and interests of the people are to be the top priority of the Party and that all industrial sectors are to be directed toward prioritizing the enhancement of the standard of living and ensuring the stable supply of food, clothing, housing and household products.¹⁶

During the 4th Plenary Meeting in December 2021, the “people-first” principle was identified as a guiding principle to shape the priorities in national economic development, with the Plenary Meeting placing special emphasis on policies related to the securing of food and residences for the people.

In his speech during the December meeting, Kim Jong Un highlighted agriculture and rural

development as “the top priority for the Party,” along with “emergency epidemic prevention work”.¹⁷ He dedicated a considerable part of his speech on policies related to agriculture and rural area development, as well as the production and provision of food for the people. The Plenary Meeting dedicated one of the six agenda items to discussing exclusively these policies, indicating the seriousness of the problems associated with food insecurity in the country. Kim directed the Party to “completely solve the food problem of the country.”

Kim also highlighted the importance of advancing construction projects for residential housing, rural and city development and restoration efforts for disaster-struck areas. These statements reflect his desire to modernize rural areas and cities, as well as to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters.

In this speech, Kim prioritized policies related to the housing and food above other industrial policies. This is in contrast with his speech in January 2021 in which he prioritized heavy industries, especially metal and chemical industries, as the cornerstone of the national economic development above all other sectors.¹⁸

D. Enabling robust mass mobilization

It should be noted, however, that the DPRK’s “people-first” principle is different from the democratic principle which is based on the concept that sovereignty resides with the people. Since the end of 2018, DPRK leaders and media have emphasized an “our-state-first principle”¹⁹ in parallel with the “people-first” principle.²⁰

According to the DPRK media, these two principles are linked by the following logic: the Party and the government are united with the people and have “accurately reflected and thoroughly implemented the will and interests of the popular masses in all fields of national and social life.”²¹ Therefore, the state and the people are united as one. In this view, the

“people-first” principle is interchangeable with the “our-state-first principle” because the state represents the interests and will of the people perfectly. Based on this logic, it follows that the leaders can decide what is in the interest of the people and what should be done to realize it.

In this light, the “people-first” principle is used to elicit the active dedication of the people and to accomplish the Party’s goals in economic development at a difficult time.²²

It is likely that, in 2022, the WPK and the DPRK government may intensify its campaign to mobilize more people for economic projects, especially in the fields of agriculture, construction and reconstruction/restoration in disaster-struck areas. In fact, during the 4th Plenary Meeting, Kim Jong Un ordered, “the entire Party and the whole country [to] concentrate efforts on farming and give manpower and material support to the rural communities” where new construction and post-disaster reconstruction/restoration projects have been continuing.²³ According to this logic, these are, in effect, ‘projects for the people and by the people’, in which the people are expected to share equal responsibility (or blame) with the Party and the ‘government for the outcomes.

E. Promoting import substitution policy: preparing for prolonged international sanctions

In his speeches during the 8th Party Congress in January 2021 and the 4th Plenary Meeting in December 2021, Kim Jong Un stressed the importance of “self-reliance” for economic development in an “extremely severe environment”, referring to the prolonged international sanctions, the pandemic and natural disasters. He called for “the dynamic advance” of the “development of socialist construction” and “Korean-style socialism” for the “comprehensive development of the state.”²⁴

In his December speech, he presented annual economic policy goals for each sector and ordered all sectors to promote “revolution” and “Korean-style socialism” based on “Juche ideas” and to introduce scientific management methods.²⁵ The terms “Korean-style socialism” and “Juche ideas” carry the connotation of “independence”, indicating that the sectors were ordered to reduce their reliance on external trade and instead to deepen reliance on indigenous market by improving productivity and management.²⁶ Effectively, Kim ordered them to further advance import substitution policy aimed at replacing foreign imports with domestic production. DPRK media has also been intensifying its campaign to promote recycling of used products and exploration of raw material within the country to decrease reliance on foreign imports and expand the domestic market.²⁷

Kim’s decision demonstrates his determination to survive prolonged sanctions by changing the country’s industrial structure. There is no indication in DPRK media coverage of his speech that he anticipated the easing of sanctions against the DPRK anytime soon.

F. Controlled, limited easing of domestic economic activities

Along with his emphasis on self-reliance, Kim Jong Un’s emphasis on the “development of socialist construction” and “Korean-style socialism” indicates his intention to continue the partial lifting of the regulation of business activities of State-owned enterprises (SOEs).

Since 2013, the DPRK government has carefully loosened state control over certain business activities of the SOEs. The 2014 amended Enterprise Act granted SOE managers (as opposed to State planners) broad rights to engage in foreign trade and joint ventures and to accept investment from domestic private investors. It also authorized

SOE managers to take decisions on issues related to human resource management and the production and sale of excess commodities.²⁸ The policy expanded the autonomy of SOE managers and increased the permissible level of private business activities within the framework of the national planned economy, which was expected to guide unofficial market activities into the official framework of the planned economy.²⁹

The SOE policy was instituted by the DPRK government in the “socialist corporate responsibility management system” (SCRMS).³⁰ It is noteworthy that DPRK media continues to refer to SCRMS positively in the context of the DPRK’s efforts to create “an alternative business system.”³¹ DPRK media reporting suggests that the country is still seeking the optimum balance between the loosening and tightening state control of the SOEs.

This trial-and-error process is also reflected in the decision by Kim Jong Un during the 4th Plenary Meeting in December 2021, by which he ordered his Cabinet to “improve the economic management methods” and to perfect “the socialist legal system.”³² This decision appears to refer to further improvement of SCRMS, rather than its abolition, as “the socialist legal system” encompasses the above-mentioned 2014 amended Enterprise Act related to SCRMS.

While Kim Jong Un has decided to strengthen the central role of the Cabinet in the management of economic development, this does not appear to mean a return to the planned economy. The DPRK’s efforts to reduce the regulation of SOEs may continue through 2022.

G. Determination to strengthen national defence capability: no interest in talks with the USA or the ROK

In the 4th Plenary Meeting, Kim tasked the national defence sector with bolstering “the

state defence capability ... powerfully” and “without a moment’s delay.”³³ Kim ordered the munitions industry — a key part of the defence industrial sector — to “dynamically” promote the production of “powerful equipment” and to improve the “quality of the national defence capacity” based on “a Juche, modern and scientific basis.”³⁴

His statements suggest that the DPRK intends to continue to strengthen its strategic nuclear deterrence and war-fighting capabilities, including the development of new strategic and tactical nuclear weapons, as defined in the 2021-2025 five-year plan established in January 2021.³⁵ There is no indication of any change to this plan.

Kim also ordered the Korean People’s Army to put “weapons and equipment on regular readiness” and to establish “firm military discipline,” which demonstrates his intention to enhance the KPA’s combat readiness in both the conventional and nuclear realms. He also ordered the bolstering of “the capability of the militia defence force”, which supports the KPA during wartime.

On external policy, DPRK media simply reported Kim’s order to the external policy sector — the DPRK’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and relevant organs of the WPK — to “cope with the rapidly changing international political situation and the circumstances in the surroundings.” There is no explanation in the DPRK media reports about the meaning of this order.

The frequency of DPRK media reporting about his speech on the national defence and external policy has dramatically decreased as compared to that of his speech in January 2021.

These observations suggest that the DPRK was deliberately signaling its disinterest in diplomacy with the United States and the Republic of Korea at this point in time, as well as its intention to continue to enhance the country’s military capabilities — both nuclear and conventional capabilities — not only for deterrence purposes but also for war-fighting purposes.

III. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

Insert text here: Kim Jong Un's decisions during the 4th Plenary Meeting in December 2021 signal his intention to prepare the country for a prolonged period of sanctions and pandemic, and his determination to survive the hardship for an extended period of time. To achieve that, he has been promoting an import substitution policy with a view to decreasing the country's reliance on the foreign trade and expanding the domestic market. Declaring 2021 "a year of great victory", he placed particular importance on securing food and residences for the people.

He has also decided to enhance the country's capabilities for reducing the risk of natural hazards. For this purpose, he has instituted the "people-first" principle and the "our-state-

first principle" in order to encourage mass mobilization at a time of crisis.

Finally, he has demonstrated his intention to continue on the path of strengthening national defense capabilities — both deterrence and war-fighting capabilities — and given no indication of abandoning the country's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes. This is consistent with his statement during his January 2021 speech, in which he described the DPRK's nuclear weapons programme as non-negotiable.³⁶ Nothing in the recent meeting or statements reported in DPRK media indicates an interest in, or an expectation of, the possible resumption of negotiation with the US or the ROK.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Kim Jong Un stated that it was necessary to “[put] an end once and for all to the era in which big powers attempted to bargain with the interests of our state and nation.” See, *Great Programme for Struggle Leading Korean-style Socialist Construction to Fresh Victory: On Report Made by Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un at Eighth Congress of WPK*, Korea Central News Agency (KCNA), 9 January 2021.
- 2 The WPK rules set out the basic rules for the structure and membership of the WPK, as well as the principles under which the Central Committee of the Party operates. They also guide all political institutions overseeing the political, economic and military affairs of the DPRK. For 30 years, there were no amendments to the rules. However, since 2010, the rules have been amended at each WPK Congress and Conference (2012, 2016 and 2021). See Jaewoo Shin, *The 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea (2)*, Open Nuclear Network, 3 February 2021. The full text of the 2021 version of the WPK rules can be found here: *North Korea's Workers' Party rule book*, NK Pro, 14 June 2021.
- 3 See, The Republic of Korea (ROK) Ministry of Unification, *Party*, available at: <https://nkinfo.unikorea.go.kr/nkp/theme/getPowerStructureDang.do>; Lankov, Andrei (2002). *From Stalin to Kim Il Song: The Formation of North Korea, 1945–1960*, C. Hurst & Co. Publishers; World KBS, *The Workers' Party of Korea*, available at: http://world.kbs.co.kr/special/northkorea/contents/archives/politics/korean_workers_party.htm?lang=j; North Korea Leadership Watch, *The Central Committee*, available at: <http://www.nkleadershipwatch.org/central-committee-of-the-korean-workers-party/>; and *1st Plenary Meeting of 8th WPK Central Committee Held under Guidance of General Secretary of WPK Kim Jong Un*, KCNA, 11 January 2021, available at: <http://kcna.co.jp/item/2021/202101/news11/20210111-02ee.html>.
- 4 While the WPK rules have been amended three times since 2010 (in 2012, 2016, 2021), there is no indication that the rule on the number of Plenary Meetings per year (제3장 당의 중앙조직, 24 [Chapter 3 WPK's Central Organization, 24]) has changed. See also, Jaewoo Shin, *The 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea (2)*, Open Nuclear Network, 3 February 2021.
- 5 This organization chart is based on information published by the Ministry of Unification of the ROK (The ROK Ministry of Unification, *Party*, available at: <https://nkinfo.unikorea.go.kr/nkp/theme/getPowerStructureDang.do>). According to KCNA, in December 2021, the 4th Plenary Meeting of the WPK's Central Committee discussed “organizational matters.” See, *Let Us Strive for Our Great State's Prosperity and Development and Our People's Wellbeing Report on 4th Plenary Meeting of 8th C.C., WPK*, KCNA, 1 January 2022. At the time of this writing, however, no information is available as to whether any change was made to this organizational structure.
- 6 The ROK Ministry of Unification, *Party*, available at: <https://nkinfo.unikorea.go.kr/nkp/theme/getPowerStructureDang.do>; North Korea Leadership Watch, *The Central Committee*, available at: <http://www.nkleadershipwatch.org/central-committee-of-the-korean-workers-party/>; and *1st Plenary Meeting of 8th WPK Central Committee Held under Guidance of General Secretary of WPK Kim Jong Un*, KCNA, 11 January 2021, available at: <http://kcna.co.jp/item/2021/202101/news11/20210111-02ee.html>.

- 7 See, Lankov, Andrei (2002). *From Stalin to Kim Il Song: The Formation of North Korea, 1945–1960*, C. Hurst & Co. Publishers; World KBS, *The Workers' Party of Korea*, available at: http://world.kbs.co.kr/special/northkorea/contents/archives/politics/korean_workers_party.htm?lang=j.
- 8 In the period between Party Congresses, the Central Committee also convened "Conferences of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK Conferenced)," as needed. WPK Conferences were held in 1958, 1966, 2010 and 2012. See, Open Source Center Analysis, *North Korea -- Propaganda Coverage of Party Representatives Conferences*, 10 April 2012, available at: <https://info.publicintelligence.net/OSC-NorthKorea-PartyPropaganda.pdf>.
- 9 The six agenda items were: (1) "On the review of the execution of major Party and state policies for 2021 and the work plan for 2022"; (2) "On the implementation of the state budget for 2021 and the draft state budget for 2022"; (3) "On the immediate tasks for the correct solution of the socialist rural question in our country"; (4) "On modifying some articles of the Party rules"; (5) "On the organizational and ideological life of the members of the Party central leadership organ in the second half of year 2021"; and (6) An organizational matter. See, *Let Us Strive for Our Great State's Prosperity and Development and Our People's Wellbeing Report on 4th Plenary Meeting of 8th C.C., WPK*, KCNA, 1 January 2022.
- 10 *Let Us Strive for Our Great State's Prosperity and Development and Our People's Wellbeing Report on 4th Plenary Meeting of 8th C.C., WPK*, KCNA, 1 January 2022.
- 11 *WPK General Secretary Kim Jong Un Makes Concluding Speech at Eighth Congress of WPK*, KCNA, 13 January 13. 2021.
- 12 *WPK General Secretary Kim Jong Un Makes Concluding Speech at Eighth Congress of WPK*, KCNA, 13 January 13. 2021.
- 13 Kim had repeatedly stressed the same goal during his earlier speech in January 2021. In his speech in December 2021, he stressed the importance of this goal even more strongly, referring to "the people" at least 48 times as compared with 31 times in his January 2021 speech.
- 14 Since the beginning of 2021, the "people-first" principle has been exemplified in various statements by DPRK leaders and articles in the media. For example, at the 3rd Plenary Meeting on 18 June 2021, Kim Jong Un stressed the importance of the "ideals" of "The People Are God" and the "single-minded unity" of the Party and the people. DPRK media has been also carrying out a propaganda campaign to promote the "people-first" principle. See, *3rd Plenary Meeting of 8th Central Committee of WPK Closes*, KCNA, 18 June 2021; and *Concentrate all efforts on the implementation of tasks to improve the stability of people's livelihoods*, KCNA, 21 October 2021.
- 15 The revised WPK rules as a whole have not been published by the DPRK. However, several journalists and experts have obtained a copy of the revised text which was leaked by a source in the DPRK. Some journalists obtained this copy through their contacts within the ROK government. For example, see, 金正恩氏、父、祖父の威光から脱却図る「先軍」から「人民大衆第一主義」へ朝鮮労働党規約改定[Kim Jong-un seeks to break away from the prestige of his father and grandfather; From 'Military First' to 'People First'; Revision of the Constitution of the Workers' Party of Korea], *The Tokyo Shimbun* online, 15 June 2021.
- 16 Katsuhisa Furukawa, *The 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea (1)*, Open Nuclear Network, 9 February 2021.

- 17 As for “emergency epidemic prevention work”, Kim set the goal of “switching our epidemic prevention into advanced and people-oriented” based on “a scientific foundation”. However, DPRK media coverage of his speech provides no further details about this decision.
- 18 *Great Programme for Struggle Leading Korean-style Socialist Construction to Fresh Victory: On Report Made by Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un at Eighth Congress of WPK*, KCNA, 10 January 2021.
- 19 For example, in his New Year’s speech of 1 January 2019, Kim Jong Un stated, “...the situation and circumstances may change, Party members and all other working people should cherish the principle of our state first as an element of their faith and step up socialist economic construction in our own way.” See, *New Year Address of Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un*, KCNA, 1 January 2019.
- 20 *Let's continue to brighten our era of nationalism by strengthening the socialist legal system*, KCNA, 26 December 2021.
- 21 This line of thinking is evident in the decision of Kim Jong Un during the 4th Plenary Meeting in which he directed the Party to further strengthen “guidance” on “the socialist rural construction” for the people. See, *Let's continue to brighten our era of nationalism by strengthening the socialist legal system*, KCNA, 26 December 2021; and *Let Us Strive for Our Great State's Prosperity and Development and Our People's Wellbeing; Report on 4th Plenary Meeting of 8th C.C., WPK*, KCNA, 1 January 2022.
- 22 This observation was also made by a former Japanese intelligence official who has been monitoring the DPRK for decades. See, Takashi Sakai, *金総書記は「偉大な親」北朝鮮の究極の父権主義* [Kim Jong Il is the 'Great Parent': North Korea's Ultimate Paternalism], Mainichi Shinbun, 9 November 2021.
- 23 *Let Us Strive for Our Great State's Prosperity and Development and Our People's Wellbeing Report on 4th Plenary Meeting of 8th C.C., WPK*, KCNA, 1 January 2022.
- 24 *Let's continue to brighten our era of nationalism by strengthening the socialist legal system*, KCNA, 26 December 2021.
- 25 *Let's continue to brighten our era of nationalism by strengthening the socialist legal system*, KCNA, 26 December 2021.
- 26 These measures have been embedded in the DPRK’s Constitution. The Constitution’s preamble stipulates that “a socialist State” is “independent, self-sufficient and self-reliant in defence.” Article 26 of the Constitution calls for an “independent national economy” of the DPRK with a “Juche-oriented, modern and scientific basis.” See, Naenara, *DPRK Socialist Constitution*, available at: http://naenara.com.kp/index.php/Main/index/en/politics?arg_val=constitution.
- 27 For example, see, *Active recycling of waste*, KCNA, 22 September 2021; *Let's analyze the experiences and lessons learned in this year's localization and recycling projects in depth*, Rodong Sinmun, 21 December 2021; *The crucial battle this year is 50 days away. Continue to struggle while solidifying the twin pillars of the self-reliant economy in the metal industry*, Rodong Sinmun, 12 November 2021; *Preemptive efforts to ensure the quality of agricultural machinery parts*, Rodong Sinmun, 11 November 2021; and *Practical research results for the development of light industry*, Rodong Sinmun, 4 November 2021.

- 28 See: *우리 식의 경제관리방법 의 완성을 내각 관계자 인터뷰 (Completion of "Our Way of Economic Management"/ Interview with Cabinet Officials)*, Choson Sinbo, 10 May 2013, available at: <https://www.chosonsinbo.com/2013/05/0510th-4/>;
「우리식의경제관리방법」의 완성을 (Need to perfect 'Our Way of Economic Management'), Choson Sinbo, 17 May 2013, available at: <https://www.chosonsinbo.com/jp/2013/05/0517th/>; Mitsuhiro Mimura, *Gendai Kitachousen Keizai (DPRK's Economy in the Modern Era)*, Tokyo: Nihon Hyoronsha, 2017 (in Japanese); and remarks by Kim Chol, Director of the Institute of Economics of the DPRK's Academy of Social Sciences, reported in: Keisuke Fukuda, *北朝鮮經濟が「社会主義」にこだわるワケ: 經濟制裁下でも広がる「企業責任管理制」とは [Why North Korean Economy Sticks to 'Socialism': What is the 'Socialist Corporate Responsibility Management System' Spreading in North Korea even under Economic Sanctions?]*, Toyo Keizai, 2 November 2016, available at: <https://toyokeizai.net/articles/-/143112>.
- 29 Katsuhisa Furukawa, *The 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea (1)*, Open Nuclear Network, 9 February 2021, p. 5.
- 30 Katsuhisa Furukawa, *The 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea (1)*, Open Nuclear Network, 9 February 2021, p. 5.
- 31 *Celebrating the 60th anniversary of the creation of an alternative business system*, Rodong Sinmun, 16 December 2021.
- 32 *Let Us Strive for Our Great State's Prosperity and Development and Our People's Wellbeing Report on 4th Plenary Meeting of 8th C.C., WPK, KCNA*, 1 January 2022.
- 33 *Let Us Strive for Our Great State's Prosperity and Development and Our People's Wellbeing Report on 4th Plenary Meeting of 8th C.C., WPK, KCNA*, 1 January 2022.
- 34 *Let Us Strive for Our Great State's Prosperity and Development and Our People's Wellbeing Report on 4th Plenary Meeting of 8th C.C., WPK, KCNA*, 1 January 2022.
- 35 Katsuhisa Furukawa, *The 8th Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea (1)*, Open Nuclear Network, 9 February 2021, p. 5.
- 36 Kim Jong Un stated that it was necessary to "[put] an end once and for all to the era in which big powers attempted to bargain with the interests of our state and nation." See, *Great Programme for Struggle Leading Korean-style Socialist Construction to Fresh Victory: On Report Made by Supreme Leader Kim Jong Un at Eighth Congress of WPK, KCNA*, 9 January 2021.

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One Earth Future's Open Nuclear Network programme is a non-aligned, non-governmental entity that seeks to increase security for all States by ensuring that nuclear decision makers have access to high quality, shareable open source information which enables them to make the best decisions in the face of escalating conflict.

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