A MILITARISED NORTH KOREA AND ITS EFFECTS
ON PEACE AND STABILITY IN NORTHEAST ASIA

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DECLARATION

1 hereby declare that the work in this thesis is my own except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

During the Cold War, the countries of Northeast Asia were in the grip of rival containment and counter containment strategies of the two contending superpowers. The situation created its own pattern of ideological and military alignments drawing the two superpowers deeper in the region. The situation nevertheless created a balance of power guaranteeing no outbreak of any major armed conflict.

However, with the end of the Cold War, states in the region began to face uncertainty about future threats, their own rapidly expanding economic strength, and the diminishing security commitments of the superpowers. This uncertainty has led to an increased level of arms purchases by these states. Nevertheless, there are yet no highly focused competitive arms accumulations (except the long-standing one in Korea) and it is still rare for military expenditure to rise as a percentage of gross national product.

Looming behind the build-up of conventional arms is the threat of a region-wide nuclear proliferation. China was the first Asian country in 1964 to become a nuclear weapon state. North Korea is believed to be in possession of at least two nuclear explosive devise. Despite not having carried out any test on its nuclear devise, the DPRK's capability to extract Plutonium from the spent fuel rods and the enriched uranium programme, had convinced intelligence agencies in the US and its allies that Pyongyang had successfully developed nuclear bombs. The question now is the DPRK's intentions for possessing nuclear weapons.
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