



International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

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ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 22: Other high-level policy issues to be considered by the Executive Committee

INFRACTION BY THE ROK TO THE CONVENTION – UNMANNED AIRCRAFT INFILTRATION

(Presented by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper proves the Republic of Korea's (ROK) unmanned aircraft (UA) infiltration, the infraction of the Convention, which was committed infringing upon the national sovereignty and jeopardizing the safety of civil aviation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in October 2024 and the double standard of some Council Member States who were in favour of the ROK, abusing the Council.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) note the information in this paper;
- b) inform all Member States of the infraction and strongly call on the ROK to stop threatening aviation safety by all sorts of UAs such as drones and balloons; and
- c) take technical measures to prevent the recurrence of such case.

<i>Strategic Goals:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Goal: <i>Every Flight is Safe and Secure</i>
<i>Financial implications:</i>	This working paper has no direct financial implications
<i>References:</i>	C-DEC 234/13 Annex 2, <i>Rules of the Air</i> Annex 11, <i>Air Traffic Services</i> Annex 15, <i>Aeronautical Information Services</i> Doc 4444, <i>ATM – Air Traffic Management</i> Doc 7300, <i>The Convention on International Civil Aviation</i> Doc 7559, <i>Rules of Procedure for the Council</i> Doc 7600, <i>Standing Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization</i> Doc 10019, <i>Manual on Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS)</i>

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The ROK committed the infiltration of the military drone into the Pyongyang City, the capital of the DPRK, at night-time in October 2024. (refer Appendix A for infiltration route on 8 October 2024)

1.2 During the flight, the drone crossed W1 and W5. (refer Appendix A, note 1 & note 2) and dropped leaflets near the STAR/SID (GASAN21A, BODOK21A, SASRI21A, SOKGE21A, SOCHA21A, SASRI21D, SASRI11D) and approach paths (RWY35) over the Pyongyang International Airport.

1.3 On 27 October 2024, the final results of investigation into the case of infringement upon DPRK sovereignty by the drone from the ROK were released. (refer Appendix B for crashed UA remnants photos)

2. REGULATION ANALYSIS

2.1 **(Sovereignty)** The basis of the Convention is the respect to the sovereignty of Member States. The UA infiltration of the ROK is a violation of Article 1 “Sovereignty”.

2.2 **(Approval of a state)** The UA infiltration of the ROK is a violation of paragraph c) of Article 3 “Civil and State aircraft”.

2.3 **(Submission of Application and flight plan)** It is a violation of paragraph 3.3.1.2 of Annex 2.

2.4 **(Route)** It is a violation of paragraph d) of Article 3 of the Convention.

2.5 **(Prohibited areas)** It is a violation of paragraph a) of Article 9 of the Convention.

2.6 **(Threat to the lives and assets)** It is a violation of paragraph 3.1.1 of Annex 2. (refer Appendix D for flight crew’s air report on various cases)

2.7 **(Dropping)** It is a violation of paragraph 3.1.4 of Annex 2. To further emphasise in detail, illegal dropping in the sovereign airspace of the other state has been committed under encouragement and approval of the ROK government since long time ago. (refer Appendix C for historical compendium of ROK’s UA infiltration).

3. CONCLUSION FROM THE COUNCIL ON THE ROK’S INFRACTION

3.1 During 13th meeting of 234th Session ICAO Council (1 April 2025), the President of the Council concluded that drones for military purposes do not fall within the scope of the Convention, that there is no sufficient evidence that the drone in question undermined aviation safety, and that it is a political issue.

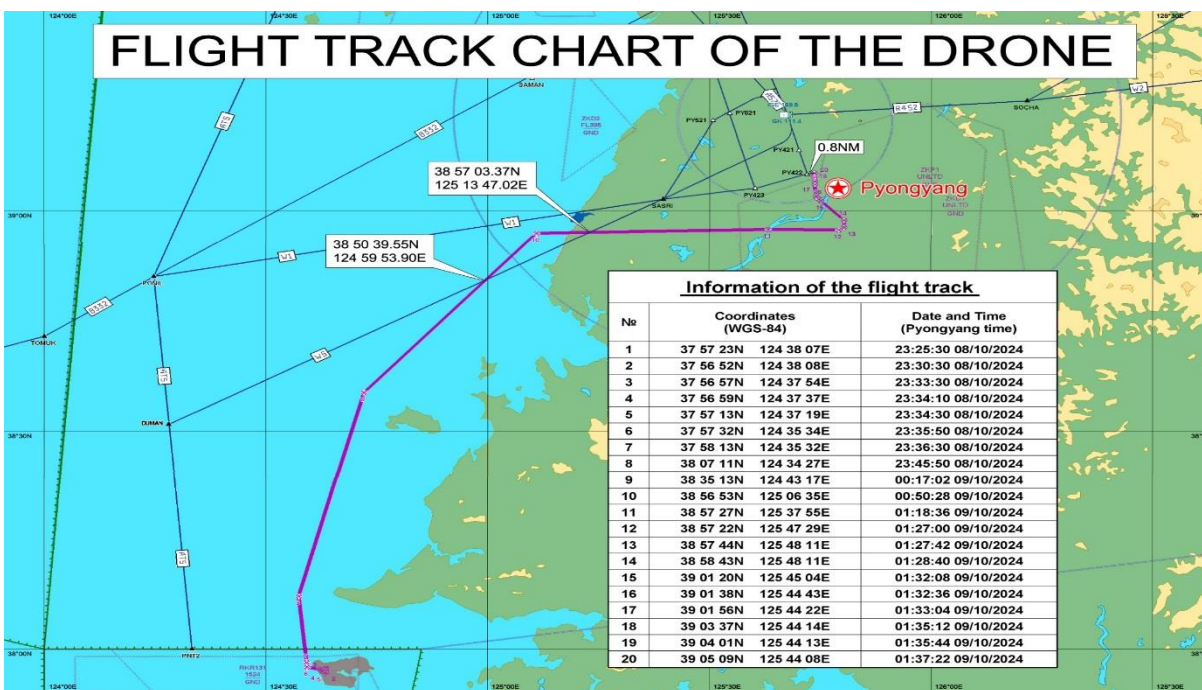
3.2 If the above logic is to be applied, missile test launches by the DPRK are military scope, no evidence of casualties, damages or threats to the civil aviation, and it is a political issue, so it is not the subject of the Convention.

3.3 The conclusion of the Council on the ROK’s UA infiltration is the double standard, so the Assembly is invited to review the Council meeting.

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APPENDIX A

DRONE INFILTRATION TRACK (8 October 2024)



Note 1: In this Chart, some domestic routes threatened by the ROK's drone (8 October 2024) are not depicted.

Note 2: According to AIP, DPRK, routes W1 and W5's specification are as follows: (ENR3.1)

- airspace classification: A, E, G
- lateral limit: 5NM

Note 3: According to AIP, DPRK, airspace classification of E and G are as follows: (ENR1.4)

- (for airspace E) ... the airspace that extends from 1000ft above the surface or the sea level...
- (for airspace G) ... uncontrolled airspace...that ... below 1000ft AMSL ...

APPENDIX B

ROK'S CRASHED UA REMNANTS

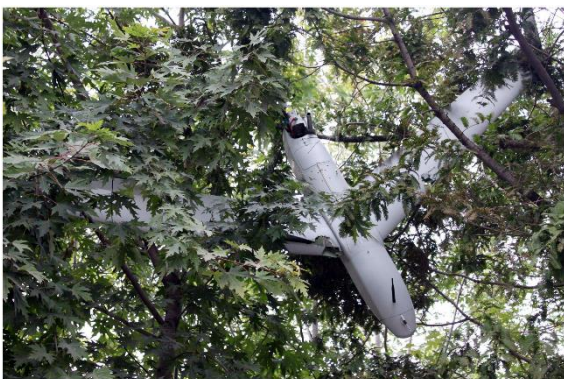


Photo B1-1. Crashed drone found on 13 October 2024 in Pyongyang



Photo B1-2. Same crashed drone before technical investigation

APPENDIX C
HISTORICAL COMPENDIUM OF UA INFILTRATION

Year	Small-size balloon Infiltration numbers	Large-size balloon Infiltration numbers	Metrological observation balloon Infiltration numbers
2020		6	32
2021	1	6	233
2022	7	59	58
2023		36	31
2024		417	314
2025	3	24	98
Sub-total	11	548	766
Total	1325		

Note 1: All balloons indicated in the above table conducted infiltration flight carrying various objects which may encounter strike damage to the manned aircraft. This is more dangerous than bird strike.

Note 2: All balloons indicated in the above table dropped various objects they carried over the densely populated area. It harmed or injured the human lives and destroyed their assests.

APPENDIX D
AIR REPORTS ON ROK'S UA INFILTRATION (2024-2025)

*=domestic flight/domestic waypoint; LSB=large size balloon; MOB=meteorological observation balloon

№	Date	Reported by	Position of reporter	Position of UA visually observed	Measures taken
1.	2024.4.15	KOR271	2 min After waypoint WASAN at 4300m	13km ahead, 12km right, LSB	Deviated 5 km left, passed abeam
2.	2024.4.23	KOR4102*	Over HAMUN	10km ahead at 3600m, LSB	Climbed to 4500m, passed, descended
3.	2024.5.6	KOR272	SOCHA21A	12km right, MOB	Informed ATC
4.	2024.7.3	KOR156	GASAN21A	6km right, MOB	Informed ATC
5.	2024.7.16	KOR4101*	- SOCHA21D - 2 min after WASAN	- Over SOCHA at 3000m LSB - some km ahead, 5km right LSB	- Deviated turning left, direct to UNPO* - informed ATC
6.	2024.7.17	ZKPY-ZKWS*	CORNAR12A	At 3000m over Chonnae county, Kangwon province, LSB	Deviated left, diverted to RWY33
7.	2024.7.19	KOR3101*	2 min after UNPO*	16 ahead, 13km right at 3700m, LSB	Informed ATC
8.	2024.7.20	- KOR152, KOR156 - ZKWS-ZKPY*	- approaching RWY17 - over KM404	- Rakrang district, Pyongyang - 8 km ahead, MOB	- informed ATC - deviated right 20km until Gowon and resumed track
9.	2024.8.23	KOR272	SOCHA21A	6km right at 1800m, MOB	Informed ATC. Following A/Cs were instructed to land RWY17 with tailwind
10.	2024.10.21	KOR271	WASAN	11km ahead, 6km right at 2800m, LSB	Informed ATC
11.	2024.11.16	KOR3101*	SOCHA	8km right, over Kangdong county, LSB	Informed ATC
12.	2024.11.22	KOR271	4min after HAMUN	2km right at 3500m, LSB	Informed ATC
13.	2025.3.4	KOR152	GASAN11A	10km left, at 3100m over Anju city, SSB	Intensified visual watch

Note: Prior to or during flight, all flight crews in this table were informed by ATC with the alert-information of UA infiltration flights, mainly provided to ATC from the military authority.

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