**North Korea Destroys Empty Liaison Office**

**朝鲜摧毁闲置朝韩联络处**

North Korea destroyed the Inter-Korean liaison office building just north of the border with South Korea on Tuesday. Some considered the act a show of anger that calls for answers from the United States and South Korea. It comes as nuclear talks between the North and the U.S. have mostly stopped.

周二朝鲜摧毁了朝韩边境以北的朝韩联络处大楼。此举发生在美朝核谈基本停止后。一些人认为这是迫使美韩回应的愤怒举措。

The building was empty, and the North had made clear plans to destroy it. The move, however, is still provocative. It is also a serious problem for efforts by South Korean President Moon Jae-in to negotiate with the North.

这栋楼是空的，北朝鲜摧毁它的计划也很明显。不过，此举仍具有挑衅性。这也是韩国总统文在寅努力与朝鲜谈判面临的一个严重问题。

North Korea’s official Korean Central News Agency said the country destroyed the office because its “enraged people” want to “force (the) human scum… to pay dearly for their crimes.”

朝鲜官方媒体朝鲜中央通讯社称，朝鲜摧毁这个办公室是因为 “愤怒的人民”想要“迫使(这些)人渣……为他们的罪行付出沉重代价”

South Korean experts believe the statement is talking about North Korean defectors who are active in anti-North Korea propaganda.

韩国专家认为，这一声明所指的是积极参与反朝宣传的朝鲜叛逃者。

The news agency did not give details about how the office in the North Korean border town of Kaesong was destroyed.

朝鲜中央通讯社没有透露坐落在朝鲜边境城镇开城的这一办公室被毁的细节。

South Korea’s government later released military video showing clouds of rising smoke. The liaison office was located at a now-closed industrial area near the border between the two Koreas.

韩国政府随后公布了一段显示冒着烟雾的军事视频。这一联络处位于朝韩边境附近一个现已关闭的工业区。

South Korea issued a statement expressing “strong regret” over the destruction of the building. It also warned of a strong reaction if North Korea continues to hurt relations.

韩国发表声明对该建筑被毁表示“非常遗憾”。它还警告称，如果朝鲜继续伤害两国关系，将会做出强烈回应。

The statement was released following an emergency National Security Council meeting. It said the destruction was “an act that betrays hopes for an improvement in South-North Korean relations and the establishment of peace on the Korean Peninsula.”

韩国在国家安全委员会召开了一次紧急会议后发表了这份声明。它说，破坏联络处的举措是“背叛改善韩朝关系和建立朝鲜半岛和平希望的行为”

The North said last week that it was cutting off all government and military communication with the South. It also threatened to end peace agreements it had reached during North Korean leader Kim Jong Un’s three meetings with Moon in 2018.

朝鲜上周表示，将切断与韩国的所有政府和军事通讯。朝鲜还威胁说称将终止2018年朝鲜领导人金正恩与韩国领导人三次会晤所达成的和平协议。

Some outside experts believe the North’s economy is getting worse because of US-led restrictions and the effects of the coronavirus. As a result, it is using provocative actions to push for an easing of the sanctions.

一些外部专家认为，由于美国主导的制裁限制和冠状病毒的影响，朝鲜经济正在恶化。因此，朝鲜试图利用挑衅行动来迫使制裁限制放宽。

South Korea’s answer to Tuesday’s destruction was strong compared to past provocations.

与过去面对挑衅的反应相比，韩国对周二的破坏行为作出了较为强有力的回应。

The liaison office has been unoccupied since late January because of the coronavirus. The office was opened in September 2018 to aid communication between North Korea and South Korea. It was considered an important part of Moon’s policy of reconciliation.

受冠状病毒的影响，被炸毁的联络处自1月下旬以来一直闲置。该联络处以协助朝韩沟通为目的于2018年9月启用。它被认为是文在寅政府和解政策的重要组成部分。

On Saturday night, the sister of the North Korean leader warned that Seoul would see the liaison office “being completely collapsed.” Kim Yo Jong also said she would leave North Korea’s military to “take the next step.”

周六晚，朝鲜领导人的妹妹金与正警告称，首尔将看到联络处“完全被摧毁”。金与正还表示，她将命令朝鲜军队“采取下一步行动”

On Monday, Moon urged North Korea to stop creating problems and return to talks. He said the two Koreas must not cancel the 2018 inter-Korean summit deals.

周一，文在寅敦促朝鲜停止制造难题并恢复谈判。他说，韩朝绝不能撤销2018年韩朝首脑会谈协议。

Leif-Eric Easley is a professor at Ewha University in Seoul. He said it is hard to see how the act of destruction “will help the Kim regime get what it wants from the world, but clearly such images will be used for…propaganda.”

莱夫·埃里克·埃斯利是首尔梨花女子大学的一位教授。他说，很难看出这种破坏行为“将如何帮助金氏政权向世界索取所求，但很明显这种行为将被用于……宣传”

Inter-Korean relations have been strained since the breakdown of a second summit between Kim and Trump in Vietnam in early 2019. Disputes over what restrictions would be lifted in return for North Korea closing its main nuclear complex caused the talks to fail.

自2019年初金正恩和特朗普在越南举行的第二次峰会破裂以来，朝韩关系一直处于紧张状态。由于对朝鲜关闭其主要核设施后美方将取消哪些相关限制存在争议，峰会会谈失败。

I’m Jonathan Evans.

乔纳森·埃文斯报道。

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