

DPRK to Host Fourth Session of 12th Supreme Peoples' Assembly on April 7

On March 15, the Standing Committee of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA) announced that the 4th Session of North Korea's 12th SPA will convene on April 7 in Pyongyang, ordering all the SPA members to pre-register from April 5 to 6.

The SPA is the highest organ of state power according to the Constitution of the DPRK. The Assembly is convened once or twice a year in regular sessions and called to meet in two to three weeks in advance. Its functions include adopting, amending or supplementing enactments to the constitution, determining state policy and budgets, and organizing elections of National Defence Commission (NDC) and other state organs.

Although the KCNA did not report on the specific agenda for the session, it is most likely to resemble the other regular sessions of the SPA, consisting of discussions of the final budget from last year as well as the budget for this year; organizational and personnel issues; and the direction of economic policy. In addition, organizational and personnel changes within the Cabinet and the NDC will likely be on the top agenda.

Particular attention is drawn to whether the heir-apparent Kim Jong Un will be appointed as the vice chairman of the NDC at this session to add to his new title of vice chairman of the Party's Central Military Commission, which he received earned last year. Another point of interest is on who will replace Ju Sang Sung, who was suddenly dismissed from his post as the Minister of People's Security. The personnel changes made at the session will play an important role in cementing the succession process of Kim Jong Un.

At the first session of the 12th Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly held in April 2009, the Constitution was amended to name the NDC chairman as the "highest leader", further strengthening the power of the Commission and Kim Jong Il.

Additionally, the second session of the 12th SPA was held on April 9, 2010 followed by the third session which was held on June 7, 2010.