



WORLD opinion has hardened further against renegade North Korea after the successful launch of a long-range rocket in defiance of warnings from the UN and Washington.

The rocket, which North Korea says put a weather satellite into orbit, is a massive technical step towards building an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) capable of reaching mainland America – or indeed any part of the globe.

The launch, which was universally condemned even by Russia and China, took place days before South Korean presidential elections.

The rocket was fired from a west coast launch pad, according to South Korean defence officials, and is believed to have successfully launched a satellite into orbit.

A North Korean TV news anchorman, reading Government-issued statements said: "The satellite has entered the planned orbit," and more chillingly "Korea does what it says".

And in a formal statement North Korea hailed the launch as celebrating the prowess of all three members of the Kim family who have ruled since the hardline communist state was founded in 1948.

Armageddon time: North Korea defiant after missile launch - "Korea does what it says" warns leadership

Written by Staff Writer

The KCNA news agency said: "At a time when great yearnings and reverence for Kim Jong-il pervade the whole country, its scientists and technicians brilliantly carried out his behests to launch a scientific and technological satellite in 2012, the year marking the 100th birth anniversary of President Kim Il Sung."

The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) said that it "deployed an object that appeared to achieve orbit", the first time an independent body has verified North Korean claims.

North Korea is banned from developing nuclear and missile-related technology under U.N. resolutions, although Kim Jong-un, the youthful head of state who took power a year ago, is believed to have continued the state's "military first" programs put in place by his late father, Kim Jong-Il.