



Kim Jong Un is the youngest son of Kim Jong Il. It is widely believed that KJI selected Jong Un to be his hereditary successor as the leader of North Korea. Kim Jong Un is KJI's second child with Korean-Japanese dancer Ko Yong Hui (1952-2004).

Kim Jong Un is currently believed to work in the State Security Department, in coordination with SSD's senior deputy director, KPA Gen. U Tong Chuk (a member of the National Defense Commission). This position has allowed external observers to claim that Kim Jong Un is working in the NDC, to which SSD is directly subordinate. Kim Jong Un has reportedly received a military education from KPA general grade officers, and directed KPA artillery drills.

Kim Jong Un was born 8 January 1984 in Pyongyang. He spent his childhood in Pyongyang at a residence near Samsok District (*Samsok-kuyok*), Pyongyang, as well as at Kim Family homes in the Wonsan area. He studied under an alias at the International School of Berne from about 1995 to 1998. He returned to Pyongyang when KJI officially took the reins of power in 1998, and eventually studied at Kim Il Sung University.

In 2001 an oblique propaganda campaign began in the North Korean press to create the cultural conditions around the hereditary succession of one of KJI's sons by Ko Yong Hui—either Kim Jong Un or his older brother, Kim Jong Chol. According to reports at the time, Ko Yong Hui actively campaigned for her KJI's consideration of her sons to succeed him. Ko used her social connections to Kim Jong Il's Personal Secretariat, particularly KWP Organization and Guidance Deputy (Vice) Director, Ri Je Gang and KJI's technical secretary, Kim Ok. Kim Jong Un reportedly traveled to Europe in 2003 to visit his mother who was medical treatment at the time.

Kim Jong Un established ties to 3rd generation North Korean elites. He became a prominent member of the social circle of the offspring of KJI's closest aides and lieutenants from the Personal Secretariat, State Security Department and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Like KJI and his cohorts, Kim Jong Un has hosted

and participated in drinking parties and similar events. Kim Jong Un is also linked to the country's Third Floor enterprises and was allegedly involved in heroin trafficking. These activities were supposedly conducted under the auspices of the Torch Group, a group of 3rd generation North Korean elites headed by O Se-won, the son of NDC Vice Chairman, Gen. O Kuk Ryol.