

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

The 42nd U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting

October 8, 2010, Washington D.C.

1. The 42nd United States – Republic of Korea Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) was held in Washington D.C. on October 8, 2010. U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates and ROK Minister of National Defense Kim, Tae Young led their respective delegations, which included senior defense and foreign affairs officials. Before the SCM, the U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael G. Mullen and the ROK Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Han, Min Koo, presided over the 32nd U.S.-ROK Military Committee Meeting (MCM) on October 7, 2010.
2. The Secretary and the Minister reaffirmed the commitment of the U.S. and ROK Presidents to build a comprehensive strategic Alliance of bilateral, regional and global scope, based on common values and mutual trust, as set forth in the June 2009 *Joint Vision for the Alliance of the ROK and the U.S.* They also reaffirmed their shared view expressed at the ROK-U.S. Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting in July that the scope of Alliance cooperation should continue to broaden and deepen to encompass both closer security cooperation and more comprehensive cooperation in other areas.
3. The Secretary and the Minister reaffirmed their shared view expressed at the ROK-U.S. Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting in July that both sides acknowledged the close bilateral cooperation regarding the North Korean nuclear issue, and urged North Korea to carry out the complete and verifiable abandonment of all its nuclear programs and pursuit of nuclear weapons and demonstrate through concrete actions its genuine will to denuclearize. They reiterated that the ROK and the U.S. will not

accept North Korea as a nuclear weapons state. The Secretary and the Minister also confirmed that they would continue to cooperate closely on the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 1718 and 1874, as well as unilateral sanctions against North Korea.

4. The Secretary and the Minister reaffirmed that North Korean aggression and provocation are not to be tolerated and that the U.S. and ROK intend to work shoulder to shoulder to demonstrate our combined resolve. They also reaffirmed their shared view that the ROK ship CHEONAN was sunk by a North Korean attack, and welcomed the publication of the final joint investigation report on the CHEONAN incident, as well as a special report prepared by the United Nations Command on the special investigation of the sinking of the CHEONAN, which was submitted to and formally circulated as an official document of the UN Security Council. They further discussed North Korean military activity in the post-Cheonan security environment, as well as countermeasures that include U.S. – ROK Combined Exercises on the peninsula and in the East and West Seas. Both sides agreed to increase the combined watch activities on the North Korean situation, especially leading up to the G20 Summit in Seoul this year. The Secretary and the Minister reaffirmed that close continued bilateral planning for various situations, as well as extensive combined training and exercises, were critical to adequately prepare for future challenges on the peninsula.

5. The Secretary and Minister reaffirmed the two nations' mutual commitment to the fundamental mission of the Alliance to defend the Republic of Korea through a robust combined defense posture, as well as to the enhancement of mutual security based on the Mutual Defense Treaty. They also reaffirmed that the U.S.-ROK Alliance remains vital to the future interests of both nations in securing peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia, and stressed their determination to

ensure sufficient capabilities of the combined forces for the security of the Republic of Korea. Secretary Gates reiterated the firm and unwavering U.S. commitment to the defense of the ROK using both capabilities postured on the Korean Peninsula and globally available U.S. forces and capabilities that can deploy to augment the combined defense in case of crisis. Secretary Gates and Minister Kim acknowledged that the U.S. commitment is to be further demonstrated and strengthened by extending and normalizing tour lengths for all service members assigned to Korea, along with the commitment to maintain the current U.S. troop level in Korea.

6. Secretary Gates reaffirmed the continued U.S. commitment to provide and strengthen extended deterrence for the ROK, using the full range of military capabilities, to include the U.S. nuclear umbrella, conventional strike, and missile defense capabilities. Moreover, the Secretary and the Minister agreed to institutionalize an Extended Deterrence Policy Committee, which will serve as a cooperation mechanism to enhance the effectiveness of extended deterrence.
7. The Secretary and the Minister pledged that the ROK and the U.S. are to continue to enhance close Alliance cooperation to address wide-ranging global security challenges of mutual interest, including through peacekeeping activities, stabilization and reconstruction efforts, humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief. Secretary Gates expressed appreciation for the ROK's past contributions in Iraq as well as the recent contribution that the ROK has made in Afghanistan through the deployment of their Provincial Reconstruction Team this year. The Secretary also positively remarked on the ROK's contribution to Haiti disaster relief operations, its anti-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden, as well as contributions to the UN mission in Lebanon. He also expressed appreciation for the Korean government's continued active participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). In particular, the ROK's hosting of the PSI Exercise Eastern Endeavor 10 later this month is expected to be a

significant step forward in the global cooperative effort to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

8. The Secretary and the Minister received a report on the results of the U.S.-ROK Military Committee Meeting from the Commander of the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command (CFC), General Walter L. Sharp, which highlighted that the combined defense posture is capable and ready to "Fight Tonight," and that it is prepared to effectively respond to any provocation, instability or aggression.
9. The Secretary and the Minister received a report on the results of the ROK-U.S. Security Policy Initiative (SPI) meetings over the past year, and expressed satisfaction that, through close consultations, the ROK and the U.S. are making significant progress on important issues in further developing the Alliance, including: ensuring an effective combined defense, proceeding with the implementation of U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) relocation and camp returns, and articulating a shared future vision for the Alliance. The Secretary and the Minister pledged to continue SPI consultations in 2011 and beyond, based on the significant accomplishments of the past six years and the mutual desire to continue to enhance the U.S.-ROK Alliance.
10. The Secretary and the Minister confirmed a comprehensive strategy to strengthen the Alliance in years to come, including achieving the transition of wartime operational control (OPCON) for the combined warfight to the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2015. The transition of OPCON should sustain and enhance the Alliance's combined defense posture and capabilities, and support both the Alliance's bilateral defense priorities and its future development. The Secretary and the Minister affirmed and signed Strategic Alliance 2015, which provides the framework for the transition of OPCON to the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff over the next five years. The

Secretary and the Minister reaffirmed their intent for the transition to occur in December 2015. They also reaffirmed that the implementation of the Strategic Alliance 2015 plan is to be regularly assessed and reviewed at the annual SCM/MCM, paying particular attention to evolving North Korean threats, and reflected in the transition process. In this regard, they further noted the importance of the OPCON Certification Plan in ensuring the transition is implemented methodically to validate that the combined defense posture remains strong and seamless. The Secretary reaffirmed that the U.S. will provide specific bridging capabilities until the ROK obtains full self-defense capabilities, and further noted the U.S. commitment to contribute enduring capabilities for the life of the Alliance.

11. The Secretary and the Minister acknowledged the progress on USFK base relocation and camp returns. They committed to work closely together to successfully complete base relocation and camp returns, noting that the efficient and effective completion of these cooperative joint efforts are in the best interest of both nations. The Secretary and the Minister pledged to minimize challenges and to strive for rapid completion of the Yongsan Relocation Plan (YRP) and Land Partnership Plan (LPP). The two also concurred that the Joint Environmental Assessment Procedure (JEAP) is useful in facilitating bilateral cooperation for camp returns.

12. The Secretary and the Minister affirmed and signed the Guidelines for U.S.-ROK Defense Cooperation, a document that seeks to embody the future vision of the U.S.-ROK Alliance, as agreed through the Joint Vision Statement last year and based on the ROK-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953. They confirmed that the guidelines provide the future direction of the U.S.-ROK defense relationship to strengthen our combined defense and strategic contribution to the regional and global security in the 21st century.

13. The Secretary and the Minister affirmed and signed the Strategic Planning Guidance, which provides the U.S – ROK Military Committee with the strategic guidance and authorization necessary to direct the development of operational planning. The Secretary and the Minister confirmed that this strategic planning guidance was a useful measure in deterring a wide range of threats against the Republic of Korea and establishing military preparation plans. The Secretary and the Minister noted that the two militaries have made substantial progress in the development of military plans related to a range of situations on the Korean Peninsula and that this document is to further ensure an effective Alliance response to potential crisis.

14. Minister Kim expressed sincere appreciation to Secretary Gates for the courtesy and hospitality extended to him and his delegation by the U.S. Government, and for the excellent arrangements which contributed to the success of the meeting. The Secretary and the Minister affirmed that the discussions during the 42nd SCM and 32nd MCM contributed substantively to strengthening the U.S.-ROK Alliance and further enhanced the development of the bilateral defense relationship into a comprehensive strategic Alliance. Both sides expect to hold the 43rd SCM in Seoul, ROK at a mutually convenient time in 2011.