

11th Korea-U.S. Integrated Defense Dialogue Joint Press Statement

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and Republic of Korea (ROK) Ministry of National Defense (MND) held the 11th Korea-U.S. Integrated Defense Dialogue (KIDD) on April 26-27 in Washington, D.C. ROK Deputy Minister for Defense Policy Wee Seung-Ho was hosted by David Helvey, performing the duties of the assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific Affairs; Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia Christopher Johnstone; and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy Robert Soofer. They were joined by key U.S. and ROK defense and foreign affairs officials, including ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director General for the North American Affairs Bureau Cho Koo-rae, U.S. Special Representative for North Korean Policy Ambassador Joseph Yun, and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Nuclear and Strategic Policy Anita Friedt.

U.S. and ROK officials concurred that North Korea's nuclear tests, ballistic missile testing and development, and other dangerous and destabilizing actions represent an immediate threat, not just to our combined forces and to our citizens in Korea, but also to regional and global security.

At the Security Policy Initiative session, both sides committed to consult closely on North Korea policy, including consideration of options to eliminate the North Korean threat in the absence of North Korea taking concrete steps toward fulfilling its international obligations and commitments by abandoning its pursuit of its nuclear program in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner. The officials explored ways to deepen alliance cooperation, including in the naval, cyber, space, and science and technology domains. The two sides also committed to enhance close cooperation to address wide-ranging global security challenges. Both sides decided to emphasize increasing trilateral cooperation as defense cooperation among the United States, the ROK, and Japan contributes not only to defense against North Korean nuclear and missile threats but also to regional peace and stability.

At the executive plenary session of the deterrence strategy committee, the two sides committed to exploring the full range of available options, including strengthening the regular deployment of U.S. Strategic assets, to bolster the alliance's ability to deter and, where necessary, respond to North Korean nuclear, weapons of mass destruction, and ballistic missile use. Both sides highlighted the importance of the deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system as a purely defensive measure focused solely on North Korea to ensure the safety of the ROK and its people, and to protect alliance military forces. The officials shared the view that pressure on or retaliation against the ROK in response to this decision is unreasonable and inappropriate and should be stopped immediately. They further urged concerned parties to actively address the root cause that makes the deployment of THAAD necessary. Further, both sides committed to increasing critical and interoperable defense capabilities—such as increased

intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance and missile defense.

The United States reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to defend the ROK against the North Korean threats with all aspects of its extended deterrence capabilities, including conventional, missile defense, and nuclear capabilities. U.S. officials also reaffirmed the long-standing U.S. policy that any attack on the United States or its allies will be defeated, and any use of nuclear weapons will be met with a response that is effective and overwhelming.

At the conditions-based operational control transition working Group meeting, the two sides noted progress in implementation of the conditions-based OPCON transition plan and resolved to develop the combined future command structure that is to be implemented after the OPCON transition.

Both sides concurred that the 11th KIDD reinforced the close bonds of the U.S.-ROK Alliance and the nations' close bilateral defense relationship. The U.S. DoD and the ROK MND look forward to holding the 12th KIDD in Seoul, Republic of Korea, in the second half of 2017.