

Kim Jong-un calls Yoon a 'puppet,' threatens to use nuclear weapons if attacked

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North Korean leader Kim Jong-un called South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol a “puppet” and said the North would use nuclear weapons “without hesitation” if the South and the United States attempted to use military force against Pyongyang, state media reported on Oct. 4.



North Korean leader Kim Jong-un inspects a training base of the army's special operations forces on Oct 2, 2024. / News1

“The puppet Yoon Suk-yeol gave a long-winded speech full of anti-North sentiment, filled with responses stemming from a victim mindset that exposes the South’s security instability,” Kim said during a visit to a training base of the North’s special operation units on Oct. 2, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Kim’s strong remarks come after Yoon’s commemorative speech during the Armed Forces Day ceremony on Oct. 1, where Yoon said that North Korea would face the “end of its regime” if it attempts to use nuclear weapons, warning of a “resolute and overwhelming” response from the South Korea-U.S. alliance.

“Yoon boasted of an overwhelming military response right at the doorstep of a nuclear-armed state, leading one to question whether he is a person of sound mind,” Kim added.

Kim reaffirmed North Korea’s position as a “nuclear-armed state” and a “nuclear power” and reiterated his commitment to retaining nuclear weapons.

Warning against any attempts to use armed forces, Kim declared, “If our enemies, in their extreme foolishness and recklessness, ignore our repeated warnings and rely excessively on the U.S.-South Korea alliance to violate the sovereignty of the DPRK, the DPRK will not hesitate to deploy all offensive forces at our disposal, including nuclear weapons.”

This marks the first time in about two years that Kim has strongly criticized Yoon without addressing him as president. The last instance occurred in July 2022 during a speech commemorating the 69th anniversary of the armistice that ended the 1950-1953 Korean War.