

# ROUGH RIDER RECON

91ST MISSILE WING INTELLIGENCE (91 MW/IN)

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This week, global strategic developments highlighted the intensifying competition in nuclear modernization, missile capabilities, and geopolitical alignments. Key events included Russia's continued nuclear weapons development, North Korea's unveiling of the Hwasong-20 ICBM, NATO's Steadfast Noon nuclear deterrence exercise, and China's rapid expansion of its nuclear arsenal. These developments underscore the need for vigilance and readiness across the strategic forces community.

## BULLY INSIGHT



**Ubiquitous Technical Surveillance (UTS):** Ubiquitous Technical Surveillance (UTS) refers to the pervasive monitoring and data collection capabilities enabled by modern technologies, including sensors, cameras, communication devices, and digital platforms. These systems, often integrated into both civilian and military environments, create a vast surveillance ecosystem that adversaries can exploit for intelligence gathering, operational disruption, or strategic advantage. Go to the following URL to learn about applying Identity Management tradecraft and mitigating UTS for you and your network:

<https://www.socom.mil/Documents/SOCOMSmartcards.pdf>

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## KEY STORYLINE 9-14 OCTOBER



The most critical development of the week is North Korea's unveiling of the Hwasong-20 ICBM during a military parade celebrating the 80th anniversary of the Workers' Party of Korea. This new solid-fuel missile, believed to be under development, is designed for faster launch readiness and has the potential to reach the U.S. mainland. The parade, attended by high-ranking officials from China and Russia, highlighted North Korea's strengthening ties with these nations, forming a loose anti-Western alliance.



**U.S. Defense Modernization:** The U.S. continues to prioritize the modernization of its nuclear triad and missile defense systems, including the Golden Dome initiative, to counter growing threats from China and Russia.



**NATO's Steadfast Noon Exercise:** NATO commenced its annual nuclear deterrence exercise, Steadfast Noon, involving 70 aircraft from 14 nations. The drill aims to ensure readiness and transparency in NATO's nuclear posture.



**Russia's Strategic Posture:** President Vladimir Putin emphasized Russia's ongoing development of next-generation nuclear weapons and downplayed the importance of U.S. participation in extending the New START treaty. He also hinted at the possibility of nuclear tests if other nations proceed with such actions.



**China's Nuclear Expansion:** U.S. defense officials revealed that China's nuclear arsenal is projected to reach 1,500 warheads by 2030, raising concerns about strategic stability and the potential for "nuclear blackmail" over Taiwan.

## RESOURCES &amp; REFERENCES 9-14 OCTOBER

**1. North Korea's Advancements**

Hwasong-20 ICBM and Military Parade:

Wall Street Journal: "North Korea's Kim Flaunts New ICBM Able to Reach U.S." [10/10/2025]

Yonhap News Agency: "North Korea flaunts missile strength with Hwasong-20 ICBM" [10/11/2025]

**2. U.S. Strategic Modernization**

Hypersonic Weapons:

Bloomberg News: "The US Is Behind on Deploying Hypersonic Weapons. Why It Matters" [10/13/2025]

Golden Dome Missile Defense:

Rep. Pat Fallon (R-TX) on X: "China is undertaking the most rapid and comprehensive nuclear and missile investments in history..." [10/12/2025]

Rep. Scott DesJarlais (R-TN) on X: "Great meeting with a fellow Tennessean, @SecWar Pete Hegseth!..." [10/10/2025]

**3. NATO's Steadfast Noon Exercise**

NATO Press Release: "NATO's annual nuclear exercise Steadfast Noon begins" [10/13/2025]

BreakingDefense.com: "Sweden sending Gripens to NATO's Steadfast Noon nuclear drill, in historic first" [10/10/2025]

Yle News: "Finnish Hornet fighters join NATO nuclear exercise" [10/11/2025]

**4. Russia's Strategic Posture**

New START Treaty and Nuclear Modernization:

Reuters: "Putin says 'no big deal' for Russia if U.S. declines to extend nuclear warhead limits" [10/10/2025]

TASS: "Russia creating, successfully testing new weapons, says Putin" [10/10/2025]

Interfax: "Russia ready to agree with U.S. on New START extension" [10/10/2025]

**5. China's Nuclear Expansion**

Warhead Growth and Strategic Modernization:

Washington Times: "China warhead arsenal to hit 1,500 in five years, Air Force chief nominee reveals" [10/10/2025]

China Aerospace Studies Institute: "Report: The Evolution of China's Nuclear Forces" [10/13/2025]

**BULLY INSIGHT: Ubiquitous Technical Surveillance (UTS)**

SOCOM Smartcards Resource:

U.S. Special Operations Command: "SOCOM Smartcards" [<https://www.socom.mil/Documents/SOCOMSmartcards.pdf>]

Cyber Hygiene and UTS:

BreakingDefense.com: "Army eyes larger all-source intelligence support to EW" [10/13/2025]

Congressional Research Service: "Defense Primer: Information Operations" [2023]