

**RELEASE**  
**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Joint Press Statement for the 24th Korea-U.S. Integrated Defense Dialogue

April 11, 2024

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) Ministry of National Defense (MND) held the 24th Korea-U.S. Integrated Defense Dialogue (KIDD) on April 11, 2024 in Washington.

Assistant Secretary of Defense (ASD) for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, Dr. Ely Ratner, and Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for East Asia, Mr. Andrew Winternitz, led the U.S. delegation. Deputy Minister (DEPMIN) for National Defense Policy, Mr. Cho Chang-rae, led the ROK delegation. Key senior U.S. and ROK defense and foreign affairs officials also participated in the dialogue.

In a plenary session, both sides had an in-depth discussion focusing on the three key pillars of the 'Defense Vision of the U.S.-ROK Alliance' agreed to by the ROK and the United States at the 55th Security Consultative Meeting (SCM): enhancing extended deterrence efforts against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), modernizing Alliance capabilities by evolving into a science and technology alliance, and strengthening solidarity and regional security cooperation with like-minded partners. Both sides agreed the KIDD was the primary forum to review and report on implementation of specific tasks in accordance with the Defense Vision of the U.S.-ROK Alliance to the SCM. They committed to continue assessing ways to synchronize and align U.S.-ROK bilateral defense mechanisms and engagements to effectively and efficiently support discussions on strengthening the U.S.-ROK Alliance and the combined defense posture.

First of all, the two sides expressed concerns that the DPRK's continued provocations and advancing nuclear and missile capabilities are destabilizing the Korean Peninsula and the region, and shared their assessments of the security environment. Both sides committed to demonstrating the strength of the Alliance through close and coordinated bilateral responses to DPRK provocations, threats, and activities that undermine regional peace and stability.

In that vein, the U.S. side affirmed its ironclad commitment to extended deterrence through regularly visible U.S. strategic asset deployments, and to support the establishment of the ROK Strategic Command to enhance deterrence against the DPRK nuclear and missile threats.

In addition, the U.S. side reaffirmed its enduring and ironclad commitment to the defense of the ROK, leveraging the full range of U.S. military capabilities — including nuclear, conventional, missile defense, and advanced non-nuclear capabilities — and reiterated that any nuclear attack by the DPRK against the United States or its Allies and partners is unacceptable and will result in the end of the Kim regime.

The two delegations discussed the DPRK's expanding military cooperation with Russia, which violates United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs). Both agreed that expanded DPRK-Russian military cooperation, particularly the transfer of weapons and high-technology, undermined peace and stability in both Europe and the Indo-Pacific region including the Korean Peninsula and pledged to respond in a close coordination with the international community. The two sides also acknowledged

the importance of full implementation of UNSCRs by the entire international community, including Russia and other members of the Security Council, and reaffirmed that these efforts supported the denuclearization of the DPRK.

Both sides assessed that the recent FREEDOM SHIELD exercise 24 (FS 24), which applied a new concept of operations, enhanced the Alliance's crisis management, and strengthened deterrence and defense against advancing DPRK threats. In addition, the two sides affirmed the plan to execute a TTX reflecting a DPRK nuclear use scenario, consistent with the Washington Declaration and as agreed by the Nuclear Consultative Group (NCG), and pledged that U.S.-ROK combined exercises would stay responsive to the rapidly changing security environment on the Korean Peninsula. They also agreed that it was imperative for the Alliance to conduct practical combined exercises and trainings, and acknowledged the need to improve realistic training conditions for U.S. and South Korean troops, including through the joint use of ROK facilities and airspace for mutually-agreed training.

The two sides agreed to further modernize Alliance capabilities by leveraging their science and technology to bring cutting-edge technologies to the warfighter, in accordance with the Defense Vision of the U.S.-ROK Alliance. They commended the accomplishments of the Cyber Cooperation Working Group (CCWG) including the U.S.-ROK Cyber Alliance exercise in January 2024. In addition, both sides noted that the ROK's recently launched military reconnaissance satellite is an important asset and contribution to extending the U.S.-ROK combined capabilities for surveillance and reconnaissance. The two sides pledged to continue cooperation through the Space Cooperation Working Group (SCWG) to strengthen the Alliance's space capabilities. In addition, both sides urged the working groups to focus on initiatives to enhance mission assurance and resilience against evolving threats. The leaders agreed that science and technology (S&T) cooperation needs to be strengthened in areas such as artificial intelligence, autonomous technology and next-generation communications, and that fields of S&T cooperation should contribute to Alliance policy established by the SCM. In that vein, the two sides discussed the way forward to establish a ROK-U.S. senior-level committee to enable science and technology cooperation and reviewed a ROK proposal to organize a U.S.-ROK joint defense science and technology conference.

The two sides agreed that cooperation to develop advanced technologies also supports shared efforts to enhance the defense industrial base of both the United States and ROK, respectively. The two delegations had an in-depth discussion on the Defense Department's progress to develop a Regional Sustainment Framework to facilitate logistics in a contested environment as well as cooperation to distribute Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul capabilities in the Indo-Pacific. The U.S. side noted the ROK's efforts to collaborate on MRO initiatives, and affirmed that such cooperation is in accordance with the direction of enhancing the Alliance's posture and capabilities. The two leaders also agreed to enhance progress on development of a Reciprocal Defense Procurement Agreement to provide reciprocal market access, which will enhance supply chain resiliency and strengthen defense cooperation between the United States and the ROK.

The two sides reaffirmed the long-standing contribution made by the United Nations Command (UNC) to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, and committed to strengthening UNC. Both sides appreciated that the results of the ROK-UNC Member States Defense Ministerial Meeting held in Seoul in November 2023 demonstrated the commitment and resolve of UNC Member States to implement, manage, and enforce the observation of the Armistice Agreement and to be united upon any renewal of hostilities or armed attack on the Korean Peninsula. The U.S. side expressed its appreciation for ROK's efforts to continue strengthening cooperation between the ROK, UNC, and UNC Member States by regularizing meetings, and both sides agreed to work closely together.

The KIDD delegations applauded the efforts of the Conditions-based Operational Control (OPCON) Transition Working Group, noting progress towards the transition of wartime OPCON to the Future Combined Forces Command. In particular, the two sides reviewed the progress on this year's bilateral evaluation on the capabilities and systems, and exchanged views on OPCON issues including the transition of Combined Component Commands to standing component commands. In addition, the

two leaders reaffirmed their shared commitment to meeting the three conditions under the bilaterally approved Conditions-based OPCON Transition Plan (COTP) in a systematic and stable manner to strengthen the Alliance combined defense capabilities.

During an Executive Session, ASD Ratner and DEPMIN Cho emphasized the important contribution of the Tailored Deterrence Strategy to deter and respond to advancing DPRK nuclear and missile threats, and welcomed the ongoing efforts of the NCG that contribute to this effect. DEPMIN Cho stressed the importance of ROK-U.S. integrated extended deterrence to the combined posture. The two leaders agreed that the consultation process enabled by the SCM provides the necessary oversight and guidance for combined plans and operations executed in defense of the Alliance.

The two leaders also stressed the importance of trilateral cooperation with Japan, and reviewed the unprecedented progress achieved since the historic Camp David Summit. The U.S. and ROK leaders shared the view that trilateral cooperation with Japan is critical to achieve shared security goals on the Korean Peninsula and in the Indo-Pacific region. Both sides welcomed the successful activation of a three-way data sharing mechanism for early missile warning information against DPRK threats, as well as the regularization of trilateral exercises. The two sides pledged to work through the Defense Trilateral Talks to deepen cooperation in response to the regional security environment, with a focus on operations in various domains.

The U.S. and ROK sides also reviewed the development of the Alliance into a globally comprehensive strategic relationship grounded in shared values and interests. Both sides concurred that it is important to make joint efforts to promote defense and security cooperation in the region. In that vein, reviewing progress from the Regional Cooperation Working Group, the two sides agreed to continue pursuit of security cooperation initiatives that promote regional peace and stability. In addition, both sides concurred on the importance of preserving peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait as reflected in the April 2023 "Joint Statement in Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Alliance between the United States of America and the Republic of Korea."

ASD Ratner and DEPMIN Cho agreed that the 24th KIDD provided guidance to continue deep and transformative Alliance cooperation in support of our shared values and interests. In particular, both sides assessed that the KIDD laid a foundation for a practical implementation of the Defense Vision of the U.S.-ROK Alliance and emphasized the Alliance's decisive and overwhelming combined defense posture. The two leaders commended the U.S. and ROK military and civilian personnel that worked to strengthen the bond of the Alliance, and expressed appreciation for their shared commitment and sacrifice.