



The Threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and the Security of the Korean Peninsula

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Remarks to the Korea Military Academy

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Thank you, General Kim for the generous introduction. Good morning distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. It is my pleasure to be here today to participate in this important gathering.

The invitation letter for today's event mentioned that the inaugural conference of this symposium was organized 22 years ago. Looking at the distinguished group gathered here today and reviewing this year's worthy agenda, I am not at all surprised that the conference has continued successfully for more than two decades. I fully expect it to continue for many years to come, and look forward to participating in the future.

I also want to applaud the Korean Military Academy for selecting the worthy topic of the conference: The Threat of WMD and Security on the Korean Peninsula. From this perspective, it is important that we look at issues related to security and counter-proliferation not just in the context of the Korean Peninsula but also in the broader context of the region around the Peninsula and throughout the world.

Considering the focus of this conference, I believe it is fitting to look at the U.S.-R.O.K. relationship which has promoted peace and stability in the region for the last 50 years. I am sure you all are aware of the success of the U.S.-R.O.K. alliance. The strength of our partnership has successfully deterred North Korea and has guaranteed the stability necessary for Korea to build a thriving economy and a vigorous democracy. South Korea and the United States have worked together to make this possible and the alliance has symbolized our two countries' shared dedication to peace, freedom and democracy.

The R.O.K.'s role in world affairs has grown as well over the course of the years. Korean forces have been deployed internationally to keep the peace in East Timor, and more recently to assist in reconstruction in Afghanistan. We are proud that Korea -- whose own history represents a victory of democracy over aggression and tyranny is part of the coalition giving the Iraqi people the chance to build a new and free Iraq. We welcome and appreciate the R.O.K.'s decision to send additional troops to Iraq and to provide \$260 million of aid. This courageous decision is a strong indication of your nation's desire for a more free and peaceful world and is a strong expression of our two countries' partnership to meet today's security challenges. Seoul's growing involvement in world affairs demonstrates the success of our relationship and our shared commitment to ensure peace and stability, when and where needed.

Moreover, by its actions, the R.O.K. has made clear that it is willing to assume leadership within the international community to defend those values. In an important sense, this demonstrates Korea's growing international role and its acceptance of responsibilities beyond this Peninsula something that the United States warmly welcomes.

If one challenge for our alliance has been to maintain the peace and stability that have enabled Korea to develop and prosper, a second challenge is for your country and mine to work toward making this alliance responsive to changing times. While the United States' commitment to defend Korea has been vital to prosperity here and to maintaining peace and stability in Northeast Asia, like all long-term relationships, ours has had its ups and downs, and like all enduring relationships, it is constantly evolving. We are committed to strengthening the alliance by enhancing, shaping and aligning our partnership to meet the challenges of the 21st century security environment. In this regard, in the ongoing Future of the Alliance discussions our two countries are making adjustments in our ties to reflect new realities and to plan for the future.

A key aspect of the Future of the Alliance Initiative is our substantial investment in the alliance. The U.S. is committing \$11 billion to enhance USFK's capabilities over the next 4 years, a move that will greatly improve deterrence and increase the security of the R.O.K.. We intend to bring in a spectrum of new defense capabilities to allow us to strengthen our mutual defense. A Stryker Brigade, recently showcased in Korea, is a good example of these planned enhancements. With both partners investing in resources, our combined forces will have the necessary capabilities to match regional threats.

We are also working with the R.O.K. Government to consolidate our bases into a more sustainable and effective military presence. The planned moves will reduce the impact on the Korean public while making our forces better positioned to deal with contingencies on the Peninsula.

Key to this improved alignment is the movement of U.S. forces out of Seoul at the earliest opportunity. We also must consolidate the 2nd Infantry Division's forces. Our current configuration does not take advantage of its capabilities or planned enhancements. As we adjust our forces to enhance capabilities, we will concurrently address the impact of our military on adjacent communities. Our goal is an alliance that is more capable but less intrusive in the lives of ordinary Koreans.

Another important part of our talks is transferring some of the functions our forces in Korea currently perform to the Korean military. The R.O.K. armed forces are one of the great chapters in the success story of the South Korea. Your military has developed itself into a world-class organization, fully capable of deploying to work along side other nations and contribute to regional and global security. It is also capable of taking on new roles and missions within the alliance and expanding the role of the R.O.K. armed forces in defending the nation. These transfers of selected missions to R.O.K. forces will not only increase the role of the Korean military forces in the combined defense, but will contribute greatly to strengthening our partnership.

As we explore how we can advance the alliance to best meet the challenges and opportunities of the next 50 years our security cooperation can and should encompass the promotion and maintenance of regional stability. This will be an increasingly important facet of our relationship since our forces here are part of a network of relationships that ensure peace and security throughout the region.

I would like to stress that while our countries are working to reshape and realign the alliance, the United States is committed, and will remain so, to a robust forward presence on the Korean Peninsula and in the Asia-Pacific region.

Unfortunately, one thing that has not changed in the last 50 years is the threat from North Korea. The Republic of Korea, the United States, and the international community continue to face a troubling challenge from North Korea, which has embarked on the dangerous path of developing nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Not only are we dealing with a country that has repeatedly violated its international nonproliferation obligations, but we also face the prospect that North Korea could produce and then export fissile material or weapons to rogue states or terrorists. This is a danger that cannot be ignored.

During their meeting in Bangkok, President Roh and President Bush reaffirmed the importance of the Six Party talks for achieving the goal of the complete elimination of the D.P.R.K.'s nuclear programs. President Bush has repeatedly stated that the U.S. has no intention of invading North Korea and we are working with our partners in the Six Party process -- the R.O.K., Japan, China, and Russia, -- to come up with assurances in a form that the North Koreans can be satisfied with. In return, we expect North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons program.

As President Bush has stated, we are working with the countries of the region to find a peaceful solution, and to show the North Korean Government that its pursuit of nuclear weapons will bring only isolation and economic hardship. The D.P.R.K. regime will be able to gain acceptance from the international community and foster hope for its people only when it turns away from its nuclear ambitions.

North Korea's missile program and its missile exports are also a pressing concern to the international community. North Korea is one of the most aggressive proliferators of missiles and related technologies to countries of concern. If North Korea verifiably and irreversibly terminates its nuclear weapons program and reigns in its missile exports, the international community will be willing to look for ways to help Pyongyang improve the lives of its people. But first we need to see signs of North Korea's willingness to live up to its commitments.

Even as we pursue multilateral diplomacy to resolve peacefully the North Korea nuclear problem, our two countries must continue to maintain our strong combined deterrent against the North Korea threat. Indeed, the importance of a strong alliance and credible deterrent capability cannot be overstated. Without that, our search for a peaceful resolution through multilateral diplomacy will be easily undermined.

As we move forward in resolving the threat from the North's nuclear program, we are pleased to learn that Iran appears to have responded to calls by the international community to come into compliance with its international obligations. Although Tehran claims that its nuclear program is peaceful and transparent, there is a consensus on the danger that Iran's program poses. The essential need is for Iran to respond fully to the outstanding questions the IAEA has, and for the nation to honor its international agreements. If Tehran carries through on its announced intention to accept international inspections and to suspend production of enriched uranium, it will show what can be achieved when the international community works together on nonproliferation issues.

We are also very pleased that the international community -- Poland, Japan, Korea, and many others -- are now pulling together to rebuild Iraq. Last week, the UN Security Council unanimously passed resolution 1511 which will bring the international community together to move forward to provide the opportunity for stability, democracy, and peace in Iraq. With the passage of the resolution, the world has the opportunity to help the Iraqi people build a nation that is stable, secure, and free.

Perhaps the greatest threat facing the international community is the new challenge posed by the intersection of terrorism and WMD. As President Bush said in his State of the Union Address, the United States' intention is to deny terrorists and state sponsors of terrorism the materials, technology, and expertise to make and deliver weapons of mass destruction. Given the goals of rogue states and terrorists, we can no longer safely rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past. In order to achieve the goal of preventing the proliferation of WMD, the global nonproliferation regime needs to extend beyond states of concern to the mechanisms that supply countries of proliferation concern. To this end, we are employing a number of tools to counter WMD and missile programs, including sanctions, interdiction, and export controls.

A crucial step in counteracting this global threat is to enhance our capability to interdict lethal materials in transit. A robust interdiction effort requires cooperation with like-minded countries. Properly planned and executed, interception of critical technologies while en route can prevent hostile states and non-state actors from acquiring these dangerous capabilities.

Through the Proliferation Security Initiative, or PSI, 11 nations are preparing to search suspect cargo to seize weapons or missile shipments that raise proliferation concerns. The PSI partner nations have agreed on a set of interdiction principles, consistent with legal authorities and are working to expand the Proliferation Security Initiative to other countries. President Bush has also asked the UN Security Council to adopt a new anti-proliferation resolution. This resolution would call on all members of the UN to criminalize the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to enact strict export controls consistent with international standards, and to secure any and all sensitive materials within their own borders.

While the countries participating in PSI agree that North Korea and Iran are states of particular proliferation concern, the initiative is not aimed at any one country, but at halting worldwide trafficking in WMD, delivery systems, and related materials. It is a global initiative. Actions taken under the PSI will be fully consistent with national legal authorities and relevant international law and frameworks. Importantly, substantial national and international authorities for interdiction already exist. Under PSI, the U.S. seeks to cooperate with other countries, so that our collective efforts will allow the maximum possible action to defeat proliferation.

In addition to PSI, there are other tools available in the fight against WMD proliferation. We continue efforts in multilateral export control regimes -- the Nuclear Suppliers Group, Missile Technology Control Regime, Australia Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement -- to exchange information about attempts by rogue states to acquire controlled technologies, and to assess whether additional items should be added to control lists.

The foundation of the United States' approach to the proliferation of WMD and their use by terrorists and other belligerents has been to tackle the problem in a multilateral manner. I firmly believe success, however difficult to achieve, will be inevitable. In an age where unscrupulous countries and terrorist organizations seek the world's most destructive technologies, the international community and the United States cannot remain idle.

Building on 50 years of an unparalleled alliance that has provided security on the Korean Peninsula, we look forward to working closely with you to fight the threat of WMD. Our two peoples are bound together by shared values of democracy and peace. These are the ties that provide us with the hope we need to face the new challenges of cooperating to maintain security in the region and the world. Thank you.

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