

October 23, 2017

**United States–Japan–Republic of Korea
Defense Ministerial Meeting Joint Press Statement**

U.S. Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis, Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera, and Republic of Korea Minister of National Defense Song Young-moo convened the 9th Trilateral Defense Ministerial Meeting in Clark, Philippines on October 23 on the margins of the 2017 Association of Southeast Asian Nations Defense Ministerial Meeting Plus. During the meeting, they held substantive discussions on North Korea, the regional security situation, and deepening security cooperation.

The three Ministers condemned, in the strongest terms, North Korea's continued provocative actions. They affirmed that North Korea's two recent missile launches that overflowed Japan and its September 3, 2017 nuclear test constitute an unprecedented and grave threat to their countries as well as to the rest of the world. The three Ministers resolved to strengthen international coordination to ensure the fast and full implementation of relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions, including resolution 2375. The Ministers called on North Korea to abandon its unlawful nuclear and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner, to cease additional provocative actions that only increase tensions in the region, and to abide by its international obligations and commitments.

The three Ministers lauded collective efforts to expand information sharing on North Korea's nuclear and missile threats and enhance response capabilities, including the execution of multiple combined flight training missions with U.S. bomber aircraft. They also committed to continue missile warning and anti-submarine warfare exercises.

The three Ministers also discussed other regional security issues, including the importance of maritime security. The three Ministers reaffirmed that freedom of navigation and overflight must be ensured, and that all disputes should be resolved in a peaceful manner, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law.

The three Ministers recognized that the United States, the Republic of Korea, and Japan face common security challenges in the Asia-Pacific region, and declared that North Korea's development of nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities, to include its intercontinental ballistic missile, threatens the security and prosperity of the three countries. They reaffirmed that the three nations are committed to enhancing defense cooperation and to maintaining a rules-based order. Accordingly, the Ministers pledged to take necessary steps to bolster their ability to improve information sharing and strengthen responses to North Korean threats.

The three Ministers pledged to actively cooperate to support diplomatic-led efforts to resolve North Korean nuclear issue through maximum pressure on North Korea. The three Ministers committed to continue efforts to backstop the international community's efforts to curb North Korea's weapons of mass destruction programs and their means of delivery. Finally, the three Ministers decided to continue holding consultations on security issues, and affirmed their strong commitment to promoting security cooperation among the three countries in order to contribute to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and around the world.