



## **Press Statement of External Policy Office of DPRK Foreign Ministry**

Pyongyang, August 4 (KCNA) -- The External Policy Office of the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, released the following press statement "We will respond to hostile forces' any option with stronger counteraction" on Saturday:

The security environment of the Korean peninsula and the region has been exposed to a serious threat, due to the reckless nuclear confrontation racket kicked up by the U.S. and the ROK military gangsters recently.

The war maniacs of the U.S. and the ROK staged from July 30 to August 1 the nuclear operation drill dubbed Iron Mace simulating a full-scale nuclear war under the pretext of countering the DPRK's "use of nuclear weapons" at the Phyongthaek U.S. military base in Kyonggi Province.

This shows that the nuclear war plan of the U.S. and the ROK, which have regularly modified and examined the nuclear strike plan targeting the DPRK since they formed the "Nuclear Consultative Group" according to the "Washington Declaration" in April last year, has entered the phase of actual and detailed execution.

The provocative acts of the U.S., which has plunged the worrisome security environment of the Korean peninsula into a more dangerous phase to persistently escalate the danger of a nuclear clash in the region, clearly indicate the very one to be held accountable for the ever-worsening regional situation.

Today's world has faced the unprecedented danger of a nuclear war, for the U.S. has doggedly pursued its wild ambition for gaining the nuclear edge in disregard of global peace and stability and regional security environment.

The acting assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Defense recently unveiled a design to deploy more nuclear weapons and develop various nuclear strike means, accusing independent sovereign countries of posing "threats."

In response to it, conservatives in the U.S. even call for deploying tactical nuclear weapons in the ROK and expanding the tactical nuclear warhead production capacity of the U.S. They even make such an extremely risky assertion that the U.S. should exert all its national power on preparing for a war against independent sovereign countries.

The U.S. has annually and systematically increased expenditure on modernizing its nuclear forces, stepping up the development of such new strategic nuclear strike means as Columbia-class strategic nuclear submarine, new-type ICBM LGM-35A Sentinel and the sixth-generation nuclear strategic bomber B-21 Raider. It gets frantic in the development of new-type nuclear weapons, conducting high-powered bomb tests and sub-critical nuclear tests.

After cooking up the "nuclear operation guidelines" with the ROK, the U.S. committed itself to providing Japan with "extended deterrence" including nuclear weapons, inveigling its vassal countries into the framework of a nuclear alliance.

All facts go to prove that the U.S. nuclear-based scheme to subdue the independent and sovereign states in the Korean peninsula, the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world is evolving in an extremely grave direction.

One side's such unilateral escalation of nuclear threat and provocative modification of nuclear posture stress the need for the other side to bolster up the self-defensive nuclear deterrence and perfect the preparations for a nuclear war.

The U.S. reckless nuclear confrontation racket makes clearer the DPRK's choice and goal for defending the security interests of the state and the regional peace and stability.

It is the constitutional duty of the nuclear forces of the DPRK to deter nuclear attacks of any forms and scales to be schemed or attempted by the hostile states, and to defend the national sovereignty and territorial integrity from present and future uncertain security environment.

If hostile states opt for making themselves and the world less secure, the DPRK is ready to take the most necessary measures to ensure its sovereignty and security interests and regional and global peace and stability.

The U.S. and its followers are bound to bear the whole responsibility for the catastrophic consequences to be entailed by their reckless option. -  
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