



Statement by Spokesman for KPA General

Staff

Pyongyang, August 18 (KCNA) -- A spokesman for the General Staff of the Korean People's Army (KPA) issued the following statement on August 18:

On August 17, the U.S. intruded a strategic reconnaissance plane into the air above the economic zone of the DPRK side on the East Sea of Korea to commit air espionage again.

The strategic reconnaissance plane of the U.S. forces made a repeat circuitous flight above the sea 520 km east of Wonsan and 430 km east of Tanchon from 5:38 a.m. to 6:37 a.m. on August 17 and intruded into the economic water zone of the DPRK side to a maximum depth of 14 km three times to conduct espionage on the eastern and in-depth areas of the DPRK.

This is a dangerous military provocation made in a matter of 20 days after the U.S. strategic reconnaissance planes illegally intruded into the economic water zone of the DPRK side on July 28 to commit espionage.

Under such situation, the KPA General Staff promptly gave an order to pursuit planes of the Eastern Anti-Air Force Division to make an emergency sortie toward the air space intruded by the U.S. strategic reconnaissance plane and carry on an alert guard duty.

The U.S. strategic reconnaissance plane retreated at around 7:15 owing to the countermeasures taken by pursuit planes of the KPA. The KPA pursuit planes had carried out an alert guard duty to frustrate any reattempt by the U.S. strategic scout plane until 9:00 a.m.

As regards the enemies' repeated provocative air espionage, the KPA General Staff is examining an operation plan to check the U.S. strategic reconnaissance planes' illegal intrusion in the controversial air space and take a complete and thorough defence measure by constantly deploying a ship loaded with new-type anti-aircraft missiles in the line of 450 kilometers away from Wonsan, the economic water zone of the DPRK side.

We have already clarified that the sky above the economic zone on the East Sea of Korea is a part of the DPRK's territorial air where our sovereignty is thoroughly exercised.

The KPA will not hesitate to take any physical counteraction to defend the sovereignty of the DPRK. -0-

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