

Joint Press Statement for the 16th Korea-U.S. Integrated Defense Dialogue (KIDD)

The Republic of Korea (ROK) Ministry of National Defense (MND) and the United States (U.S.) Department of Defense (DoD) held the 16th Korea-U.S. Integrated Defense Dialogue (KIDD) on September 26-27, 2019, in Seoul. ROK Deputy Minister for National Defense Policy Chung Sukhwan and U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for East Asia Heino Klinck led their respective delegations comprised of key ROK and U.S. defense and foreign affairs officials.

During the KIDD, the ROK and U.S. delegations reaffirmed the common objective of achieving complete denuclearization and permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula and assessed that the implementation of the Comprehensive Military Agreement (CMA) over the course of a year contributed to easing of military tension and building confidence on the Korean Peninsula. The two sides pledged to continue communication and cooperation throughout the implementation process of the CMA while maintaining a steadfast ROK-U.S. combined defense posture and compliance with the Armistice Agreement.

At the Security Policy Initiative (SPI) session, the ROK and the United States discussed cooperative measures to deepen and expand the ROK-U.S. Alliance, and shared their views on a future vision for the Alliance.

The two sides shared assessments on the recent launches by North Korea and confirmed that they would stay vigilant as defense authorities. The two sides also concurred on the importance of facilitating diplomatic engagement with North Korea.

Both delegations agreed on the importance of faithfully implementing United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) until North Korea complies with its international obligations regarding denuclearization.

With regard to the current Special Measures Agreement (SMA), the two sides also shared the achievements of employing the SMA Improvement Joint Working Group (IJWG). The working group engaged in constructive consultations on how the SMA and its implementing procedures can better enable the Alliance.

The two sides also concurred on the importance of the ROK's acquisition of defense capabilities and the improvement of ROK-U.S. military interoperability for the advancement of comprehensive Alliance capabilities. Accordingly, the two sides pledged to continue to deepen and develop cooperation in various fields.

During the Condition-based OPCON Transition Working Group (COTWG) session, the ROK and the U.S. reviewed the continuing progress in preparation for the transition of wartime operational control (OPCON) and committed to strengthening the joint effort to meet the conditions for OPCON transition.

The two sides shared the view that the recent Combined Command Post Training played an important role in assessing the Initial Operational Capability (IOC) of the Future Combined Forces Command. They agreed to report the certification assessment results to the defense ministers of both the ROK and the United States during the SCM later this year and pursue other necessary follow on measures.

Accordingly, the two sides pledged to continue to develop related documents, including the Annexes to the Conditions-based OPCON Transition Plan (COTP), based on the Alliance Guiding Principles following the Transition of Wartime Operational Control.

At the Deterrence Strategy Committee (DSC) plenary session, the ROK and the United States discussed various means to maintain and enhance effective deterrence capabilities including nuclear, conventional, and missile defense capabilities, considering the security situation on the Korean Peninsula. The United States also reaffirmed its extended deterrence commitments to the ROK.

The DSC approved many of the recommendations from the recent Joint Study on Extended Deterrence directed towards identifying options to maintain and, if necessary, enhance credible nuclear deterrence tailored to the threats in the region. The two sides also pledged to continue cooperation to implement the ROK-U.S. Tailored Deterrence Strategy.

Both sides assessed that the KIDD has contributed to the coordination of defense policies between the ROK and the United States. The two sides pledged to continue close communication and cooperation to maintain and strengthen the combined readiness posture based on the ROK-U.S. Alliance that is the linchpin of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and the Northeast Asian region.