

UNITED STATES-JAPAN-REPUBLIC OF KOREA TRILATERAL MINISTERIAL MEETING (TMM) JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

June 2, 2024 – Singapore

U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III, Japan Minister of Defense Kihara Minoru, and Republic of Korea (ROK) Minister of National Defense Shin Won-sik convened a Trilateral Ministerial Meeting on June 2, 2024, in Singapore. They discussed shared regional security concerns, reviewed the implementation of trilateral security cooperation lines of effort presented at the historic Camp David Summit on August 18, 2023, and discussed new initiatives to strengthen and institutionalize trilateral security cooperation to contribute to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, in the Indo-Pacific region, and beyond. The leaders underscored the importance of maintaining this momentum and decided to hold the Trilateral Ministerial Meeting (TMM), the Trilateral Chiefs of Defense (Tri-CHOD) meeting, and the Defense Trilateral Talks (DTT) – with the intent to rotate hosting beginning this year.

The Secretary and the two Ministers affirmed their enduring commitment to strengthen trilateral security cooperation to deter nuclear and missile threats posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and to achieve the complete denuclearization of the DPRK in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs). They condemned the DPRK's recent diversification of nuclear delivery systems, tests and launches of multiple ballistic missiles, the launches of what the DPRK purports to be a military reconnaissance satellite using ballistic missile technology, illicit ship-to-ship transfers, and arms shipments with Russia as clear violations of multiple UNSCRs. The United States reaffirmed its ironclad commitment to the defense of Japan and the ROK, emphasizing its commitment is backed by the full range of U.S. capabilities, including conventional and nuclear.

The three leaders urged the international community to advance its stated goal of ensuring the DPRK fully complies with its obligations under relevant UNSCRs, and affirmed they will redouble their efforts in support of effective UNSCR implementation following Russia's veto blocking the renewal of the UN Panel of Experts' mandate to monitor implementation of sanctions on the DPRK. The three sides also expressed concern about the DPRK's most recent attempt to launch a military satellite and urged the DPRK to cease all further destabilizing activities immediately. They reaffirmed that a DPRK nuclear test, if conducted, would be met with a strong and resolute response from the international community. They also reiterated that the path to dialogue remains open toward peaceful and diplomatic resolution with the DPRK.

The Secretary and the Ministers stressed the importance of the rules-based international order and reaffirmed their commitment to stand with Ukraine against Russia's unprovoked and brutal war of aggression, and recognized that Russia's actions are a serious violation of the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty that undermine the fabric of the international order.

The three leaders exchanged views on implementing the U.S. Indo-Pacific Strategy, Japan's new plan for a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," and the ROK Strategy for a Free, Peaceful, and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region.

As emphasized at the Camp David Summit, the Secretary and the Ministers reaffirmed that they strongly oppose any unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the waters of the Indo-Pacific, and they recalled their respective positions regarding the dangerous and aggressive behavior by the People's Republic of China (PRC) supporting unlawful maritime claims that they have recently witnessed in the South China Sea. They shared concerns about actions that are inconsistent with international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They stressed the importance of fully respecting international law including the freedom of navigation and overflight.

Additionally, they recognized that there is no change in their basic positions on Taiwan and emphasized the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait as an indispensable element of security and prosperity in the international community. They called for the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues.

The Secretary and the Ministers recognized progress made since the August 2023 Camp David Summit, including the activation of a data sharing mechanism to exchange real-time missile warning data to detect and assess ballistic missiles launched by the DPRK. They pledged to enhance cooperation by further optimizing the data-sharing mechanism by the end of this year to ensure the ability to deter and counter provocations effectively.

The Secretary and the Ministers decided to execute the first iteration of the new, multi-domain trilateral exercise, FREEDOM EDGE, this summer. They reaffirmed that trilateral exercises will be executed in a systematic manner in accordance with the multi-year trilateral exercise plan, which was established last year following the August 2023 Camp David Summit.

The leaders also decided to conduct a trilateral tabletop exercise (TTX) to discuss how to effectively deter and respond, based on various threats on the Korean Peninsula and in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Secretary and the Ministers recognized the importance of continuing to advance trilateral cooperation following the August 2023 Camp David Summit and pledged to develop a trilateral security cooperation framework within the year to institutionalize trilateral security cooperation, including senior-level policy consultations, information sharing, trilateral exercises, and defense exchange cooperation.

Japan and the ROK highlighted the importance of their bilateral ties and trilateral cooperation to protect and advance their shared security goals. The Secretary and the two Ministers committed to continue to strengthen trilateral cooperation to ensure peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula, the Indo-Pacific, and beyond.