



NORTH KOREA ISSUES FRESH THREAT TO U.S.

March 21, 2013 Reuters reported: 'North Korea said it would attack U.S. military bases on Japan and the Pacific island of Guam if provoked, a day after leader Kim Jong-un oversaw a mock drone strike on South Korea.

The North also held an air raid drill on Thursday after accusing the United States of preparing a military strike using bombers that have overflowed the Korean peninsula as part of drills between South Korean and U.S. forces.

North Korea has stepped up its rhetoric in response to what it calls "hostile" drills between South Korea and the United States. It has also been angered by the imposition of fresh U.N. sanctions that followed its February 12 nuclear test.

Separately, South Korea said a hacking attack on the servers of local broadcasters and banks on Wednesday originated from an IP address in China, raising suspicions the intrusion came from North Korea.

"The United States is advised not to forget that our precision target tools have within their range the Anderson Air Force base on Guam where the B-52 takes off, as well as the Japanese mainland where nuclear powered submarines are deployed and the navy bases on Okinawa," the North's supreme military command spokesman was quoted as saying by the KCNA news agency.

Japan and U.S. Pacific bases are in range of Pyongyang's medium-range missiles.'

KHAMENEI: IRAN WILL DESTROY TEL AVIV IF ATTACKED

March 21, 2013 The Jerusalem Post reported: 'Iran's most powerful authority said the Islamic Republic would destroy the Israeli cities of Tel Aviv and Haifa if Israel launched a military attack against it.

"At times the officials of the Zionist regime (Israel) threaten to launch a military invasion but they themselves know that if they make the slightest mistake the Islamic Republic will raze Tel Aviv and Haifa to the ground," Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said during an address, broadcast live on state television.

Israel has threatened military action against Iran unless it abandons nuclear activities which the West suspects are intended to develop nuclear weapons, allegations Tehran denies.

Khamenei also took to his official Twitter account to express his thoughts on Israel's threats to Iran...'



ANALYST: RUSSIA PREPPING MILITARY TO FIGHT U.S.

March 20, 2013 World Net Daily reported: 'The Russian military doctrine adopted in 2010 after the "reset" with the Obama administration considers the U.S. and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, or NATO, the main threats Moscow must be prepared to fight...

This is the assessment of Alexei Arbatov, a former Duma, or parliament, deputy and currently head of the Center for International Security of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Recent events have underscored the prospect due to the firing of Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov, who served under then-President Dmitry Medvedev, who now is the Russian prime minister.

Russian President Vladimir Putin replaced Serdyukov with Sergei Shoigu, who is more in line with Putin's outlook on the future role and capabilities of the military.

Under Medvedev, Serdyukov had a different approach, which was to more closely work with the West in an effort to obtain Western technologies and know-how to modernize not only Russian infrastructure but also the military. All of that went away with Putin's more confrontational approach with the U.S. and his efforts to blunt American influence in Central Asia, which Moscow claims is in its sphere of influence.

Putin also aims to recreate a post-Soviet empire by incorporating the former Soviet republics into a Eurasian Union, a duty-free zone that he sees rivaling the European Union in years to come. According to Arbatov, Russia's defense and foreign policies now reflect that Russia is surrounded by enemies led by the U.S. Moscow is concerned that the U.S. and its NATO allies will invade Russia at any time.'

US, JAPAN REVIEW WORST-CASE PLANS FOR ISLAND DISPUTE

March 20, 2013 AFP reported: 'US and Japanese officers are discussing worst-case contingency plans for retaking disputed islands in the East China Sea if China moves to seize them, US officials said Wednesday. Japan's Nikkei newspaper first reported the talks, which prompted a strong reaction from China.

"We have contingency plans and we discuss them with allies," a US official told AFP speaking on condition of anonymity, saying it was "natural" that the two governments would confer on emergency scenarios given recent tensions. A Pentagon official, who also asked not to be quoted by name, confirmed the discussions, saying "we're a planning organization."

But both sources said the US government did not want to fuel tensions, and that the contingency planning would be only one of many topics on the agenda when top US and Japanese officers meet in Hawaii later this week.

Adm. Samuel Locklear, head of US Pacific Command, is...to host Gen. Shigeru Iwasaki, chief of the Japanese Self Defense Forces Joint Staff, for Thursday...Officially, the Pentagon would neither confirm nor deny whether the contingency plans were under discussion.

"As a matter of policy, we do not discuss our military planning efforts," said Lieutenant Colonel Catherine Wilkinson.

"The US policy on the Senkaku Islands is long-standing. We encourage the claimants to resolve the issue through peaceful means," she said, using the Japanese name for the islands. The United States has made clear that its alliance with Tokyo applies to the islands, raising the possibility of US military action in support of Japan if China moves to seize them.

Beijing and Tokyo both claim the islands, which the Chinese call the Diaoyu. The dispute has escalated in recent months, with Beijing repeatedly sending ships to waters around the islands to back up its claims. Tokyo has alleged that a Chinese frigate locked its radar on a Japanese destroyer in January.'

AFGHAN GOVERNMENT SAYS NATO WAR 'AIMLESS, UNWISE'

March 19, 2013 SpaceWar.com reported: 'Afghanistan's presidential spokesman on Tuesday described the NATO-led military operation in the war-torn nation as "aimless and unwise", in the latest broadside by Kabul against the international coalition.

Aimal Faizi, spokesman for President Hamid Karzai, hit out after NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen rejected Karzai's recent allegations of US collusion with the Taliban.

"The people of Afghanistan ask NATO to define the purpose and aim of the so-called war on terror.... (They) consider this war as aimless and unwise to continue," Faizi said in a statement.

The verbal onslaught is likely to worsen relations between Afghanistan and the...coalition that has been fighting for 11 years against Islamist militants who are trying to overthrow Karzai's government. In recent weeks the Afghan leader has been staking out increasingly nationalist ground as he prepares for his final year in office before he steps down when presidential elections are held in April 2014.

Next year will also see the withdrawal of all NATO combat troops from Afghanistan, leaving poorly trained and inexperienced local security forces to take on the insurgents.'

US FLIES B-52s OVER SOUTH KOREA AMID NORTH RHETORIC

March 19, 2013 BBC News reported: 'The US is flying nuclear-capable B-52 bombers over South Korea, in what it says is a response to escalating North Korean rhetoric. US officials said the B-52 flights demonstrated "extended deterrence capabilities" amid rising tension on the peninsula. The aircraft, which can also carry conventional weapons, flew on 8 March, with another mission set for Tuesday.

Regional tension remains high after the North's third nuclear test last month. This is not the first time that B-52 bombers have been used as part of regular military drills between the US and South Korea.

"We're drawing attention to the fact that we have extended deterrence capabilities that we believe are important to demonstrate in the wake of recent North Korean rhetoric," US Pentagon press secretary George Little said.

"As North Korea threatened to attack South Korea with nuclear weapons, the exercise involving B-52s is meaningful, as it shows US commitment to provide its nuclear umbrella on the Korean peninsula," said Kim Min-seok, spokesman for South Korea's Defence Ministry.'



RUSSIA DISMISSES US MISSILE DEFENCE MOVE

March 18, 2013 spacedaily.com reported: 'Russia said Monday it saw "no concession" in the US decision to abandon the final phase of its missile shield for Europe in favour of deploying new interceptors against a possible attack from North Korea. The US move was seen in Washington as raising prospects for a revival of arms control talks with Russia.

But Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told the Kommersant business daily: "This is not a concession to Russia and we do not see it as such. Our objections remain." US Defence Secretary Chuck Hagel said Friday that 14 more interceptors would be stationed in Alaska -- increasing by almost half the 30 already deployed along the western coastline. The aim is to have them in place by 2017."

The US decision means it will not go through with the fourth phase of its missile defence deployments in Europe under which interceptors focused on Iran were due to have been placed in Poland.'

Compiled by L. Jim Tuck, Pastor

UCGIA Oakland, San Jose, Santa Rosa, Stockton, and Hawaii

ljt5053@sbcglobal.net