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**North Korea Warns of a Hydrogen Bomb Test amid US Threats**

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A senior North Korean official warned of “the most powerful detonation” of a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific if the country felt hostility from the United States.

A senior North Korean diplomat warned that the United States could witness a hydrogen bomb test over the Pacific Ocean unless discussion of military intervention ceased.

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This latest development comes amid joint U.S.-South Korea war games and a heavy navy presence in the Pacific ahead of U.S. President Donald Trump’s visit to the region. Trump’s visit is expected to solidify regional commitments to security against North Korea, which the U.S. sees as a threat.

During a session of the United Nations General Assembly last month, North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho said that Pyongyang would conduct “the most powerful detonation” of a hydrogen bomb over the Pacific if the country felt hostility.

“The foreign minister is very well aware of the intentions of our supreme leader, so I think you should take his words literally,” said Ri Yong Pil, a senior diplomat in North Korea’s Foreign Ministry, to CNN, warning that North Korea “has always brought its words into action.”

Members of the international community, including Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, have accused the U.S. of stoking nuclear tensions through decertifying the Iran nuclear deal, despite no evidence of noncompliance, and aggression against North Korea.

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the ‘The Otto Warmbier North Korea Nuclear Sanctions Act’ that would level the “harshest sanctions ever” against North Korea. The sanctions would also target international business partners of North Korea, most importantly China, if signed into law.

President Trump has also coupled sanctions with threatening words.

“You would be shocked to see how totally prepared we are if we need to be,” Trump said in a FOX News interview. “Would it be nice not to do that (military intervention)? The answer is yes.”

Trump, in a conference with top military officials, called present tensions “the calm before the storm.”

“The U.S. is talking about a military option and even practicing military moves. They’re pressuring us on all fronts with sanctions. If you think this will lead to diplomacy, you’re deeply mistaken,” Ri said.

The U.S. has bolstered its military presence around the Korean peninsula since the war of words began. The U.S. military has also put nuclear-capable B-52 bombers on a 24-hour alert, which has not happened since the end of the Cold

War.

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“The joint military exercises conducted by the U.S. one after another all the year round on the Korean peninsula are clearly aggressive war exercises in their nature and scale,” Ja Song-nam, North Korea's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, said in a letter to Francois Delattre, the current President of the United Nations Security Council.

“No other country in the world than the DPRK (North Korea) has ever been subjected to such an extreme and direct nuclear threat from the U.S. for such a long time and witnessed on its door such nuclear war exercises which are the most vicious and ferocious in their scale, style, aim and essence,” the letter continued.

With building tensions, the international community has encouraged dialogue between both sides. China introduced a “double freeze” tactic, identical to previous North Korean proposals, that would see North Korea end its nuclear program in exchange for promises by the U.S. to end hostility. The U.S. denied this plan as it has done in the past.

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