

# **Debate on THAAD Deployment and ROK National Security**

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Institute of Foreign & Security Policy on East Asia


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## Debate on THAAD Deployment and ROK National Security

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### THAAD Deployment as a Controversial Issue

Pros and Cons debates on the deployment of the U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) to the Korean theater have already taken place in several venues. Currently, the Republic of Korea (ROK) government is at a crossroad of either cooperating with the U.S. as an ally to deploy THAAD due to national survival considerations in the face of North Korea's nuclear and missile threat, or accepting China's request to refuse the system due to ROK's national interest including the economic importance with China.

In consideration of the imminent security situation and controversial political arguments, this paper will conduct a threat assessment of North Korea's nuclear and missile capabilities. Then, the paper will address the current reality of the ROK-U.S. combined missile defense system and capabilities of THAAD along with X-band radar. Furthermore, the paper will focus on examining the position of the concerned countries. Finally, the paper will concentrate on analyzing the pros and cons of THAAD in terms of political and diplomatic, military strategic, and economic implications. The paper will make policy recommendations for respective key actors.

### Threat Assessment of North Korea's Nuclear and Missile

The 2014 Defense White Paper published by the ROK Ministry of Nation Defense estimated that North Korea is in a substantial position to obtain ballistic missile capabilities delivering nuclear warheads and develop KN-08 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) threatening the continental United States.<sup>1</sup> In 2014, North Korea test-fired 111 missile rounds consisting of FROG, SCUD, ER, and Rodong Missiles in order to increase accuracy of their missiles.<sup>2</sup> North Korea conducted surprise and clandestine long-range missile test-firings employing Transportable Erector Launchers (TELs) at medium and high altitudes toward the East Sea crossing inland over North Korea



from missile sites in the vicinity of the border between North Korea and China, as well as sites near the Kaesong Industrial Complex. In addition, North Korea test-fired a Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM) on May 8, 2015.

It is noteworthy that North Korea adopted preemptive nuclear strike as its nuclear doctrine. Since the third nuclear test on Feb 12, 2013, North Korea has pursued a self-defense deterrence strategy in order to prevent opposing forces from attacking by signaling massive retaliation employing nuclear warheads. On March 31, 2013, the North Korean Supreme People's Congress adopted the constitutional law regarding further strengthening the status as a nuclear state. The moment when North Korea reorganized the Strategic Rocket Command into the Strategic Command in Feb 2014, preemptive nuclear strike became the more significant doctrine.<sup>3</sup>

Especially, Kim Jong-un proclaimed the year 2015 as the time for a great war of unification and approved the 'Seven Days War Plan' at the extended Workers Party Central Military Committee on Aug 25, 2012. The War Plan dictates that the Korea People's Army (KPA) take the initial momentum with asymmetrical weapons systems including nuclear missiles and occupy the Korean peninsula prior to the deployment of U.S. augmentation forces. In 2014, Kim Jong-un paid 73 on-site visits to strategic weapon systems test-firings as well as exercise and training for operational plan implementation. It seems highly likely that North Korea will test-fire a KN-08 missile as an ICBM in the foreseeable future given that we observed the modified KN-08 missile during the parade for the commemoration of 70th anniversary of the North Korea Workers' Party foundation on October 10, 2015.

In that context, the Republic of Korea-U.S.'s are committed to preventing attacks with asymmetric assets such as a nuclear warhead delivered by a missile which would inflict a catastrophic number of casualties.

## **Status of the ROK-U.S. Combined Missile Defense and THAADs**

The ROK-U.S alliance has taken synchronized efforts to cope with the North Korea's nuclear and missile threat through Extended Deterrence Policy Coordination Committee (EDPC) and Counter-missile Capabilities Committee (CMCC) and eventually established the ROK-U.S. Deterrence Strategy Committee in September 2015.

In connection with this strategic environment trend, the ROK forces plan to establish Kill-Chain and Korea Air Missile Defense (KAMD) systems against North Korea's nuclear and missile threat. Kill-chain strengthening war fighting capabilities in accordance with the 4D concept (detect, defend, disrupt and destroy) and KAMD consisting of PAC-3 and Long & Medium SAM as ground-to-air missile are scheduled to be fielded around the mid 2020 years.

South Korea is vulnerable because it is insufficiently equipped to defend against the 1,000 missiles of North Korea with only 48 PAC-2 anti-missile missiles. South Korea decided it will develop its own indigenous long range surface-to-air missiles instead of purchasing THAAD. In the meantime, U.S. forces in Korea are equipped with PAC-3 missiles which have a range of 15-40 km



with a 24 km altitude limit. The PAC-3 is not sufficient for protecting U.S. forces in Korea since these weapons cover a limited area.

Once THAAD is placed in the field, it has a range of 200km and altitude of 40-150km as an anti-missile weapon system consisting of launchers, missiles, radar, fire control, and communication support equipment. AN/TPY-2 has two mode X-band radars: Forward Based Mode (FBM) with range of detection of 1,800 km and Terminal Based Mode (TBM) of 600km.

**Figure 1. Missile Defense on the Korean Peninsula**



Source: "S. Korea faces tough decision on THAAD: Experts call on Seoul to make decision strictly based on security interests," *The Korea Herald*, Nov. 6, 2014.

## Position of Concerned Countries related to Deployment of THAAD to U.S. Forces in Korea

### The Republic of Korea

The ROK government's position on the deployment of THAAD to U.S. forces in Korea is based on the three No's: "no official request from the U.S., no review, no decision." Strategic ambiguity might be South Korea's stance, considering China's protest against THAAD's deployment, in pa-



parallel with the inevitability of the deployment to protect the U.S. soldiers and assets in South Korea against North Korea's missile threat.

In June, 2014, Former Minister of National Defense Kim Kwan-jin, current Chief of the Office of National Security, made it clear that anti-ballistic missile capabilities for USFK will be enhanced in the event of THAAD deployment along with Patriot surface-to-air missiles. On September 16, 2014, former Minister of National Defense Kim continued to insist, "The MD system primarily aims at defending the Continental U.S. KAMD will protect the Republic of Korea. However, objective, range, and function of KAMD are different from those of the U.S. Missile Defense." In addition, he clearly mentioned that South Korea did not make any decision to procure nor even consider the acquisition of SM-3 and THAAD. It seems that those statements attempted to interdict the continuing debate on joining the MD systems led by the U.S. if the ROK purchases those weapon systems which consists of boost-up, medium, and terminal stages.<sup>4</sup>

On Oct 7, 2014, Defense Minister Han Min-koo made his position clear relating to the issue of the THAAD deployment to the USFK at the National Assembly audit of the government, saying, "Considering the limited assets against North Korea's nuclear and missile threat, the THAAD deployment will contribute to enhancing the ROK's security and defense. The immense range of defense by the THAAD will enormously contribute to the defense of the Republic of Korea as well as the USFK."

Foreign Affair Minister Yun Byung-se provided the official position regarding the THAAD issue, "If the U.S. will officially make a request on the THAAD issue to the ROK, then the National Security Council will make a final decision based on review by the Ministry of National Defense. If necessary, the ROK government will explain it to neighboring countries including China."<sup>5</sup>

## The U.S.

At the forum hosted by the Korea Institute of Defense Analysis (KIDA) in June 2014, USFK Commander Curt Scaparrotti's mention that the USFK's request to the U.S. government for the deployment of THAAD created intense debate. In particular, since some public organizations insisted that the deployment of THAAD to Korea is considered to be symbolically joining the Missile Defense system led by the U.S., this issue was a departure from the nature of THAAD and became a political issue.<sup>6</sup>

The primary purpose for deploying THAAD to South Korea is to protect the soldiers and combat assets of USFK against increasingly direct nuclear and missile threats. In addition, in terms of a strategic military perspective, the implementation of the tailored deterrence strategy (TDS) by the deployment of THAAD to the Korean theater will reinforce extended deterrence strategy (EDS) to deter North Korean nuclear and missile attacks.<sup>7</sup>

If the ROK is reluctant to support THAAD deployment due to China's opposition, or if the ROK government will not cooperate with the deployment despite the fact that the ROK government proposed the re-postponement of the transition of wartime operation control because of the increasing threat from North Korea's nuclear and missile capabilities, then it seems highly likely



that the issue can lead the U.S. to mistrust the ROK. If the ROK government denies THAAD deployment in order to protect U.S. Forces in Korea against missile attacks, serious skepticism will arise as to why the U.S. should have unprotected troops in Korea.

In the mean time, during his April 9, 2015 visit to Seoul, U.S. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter said his country is not ready to begin discussions on the possible deployment of its advanced missile defense system to the Korean Peninsula. "[THAAD] is a program that is in production... in the United States.," Carter told a joint press conference in Seoul with South Korean Defense Minister Han Min-koo. Citing a series of steps to be taken before the deployment of THAAD batteries, Carter said, "We're not at the point yet of determining where it might be suitably deployed in the future... So, we're not at the point yet where we would begin discussions with anyone around the world."

It is estimated that Washington has expressed its willingness to deploy the battery here to better protect South Korea and some 28,000 U.S. troops from North Korea's threats, though officials of the two allies have said no official consultations or decisions have taken place on the matter.

## North Korea

In accordance with North Korea's Rodong Daily Newspaper on Feb 2, 2015, North Korea weighed in on the proposed deployment of a U.S. missile defense system in South Korea, criticizing it as a Cold War-era move to contain China and Russia.<sup>8</sup> The North Korean response appeared aimed at exploiting tensions between Washington, Beijing, Moscow and Seoul over the THAAD system. In a statement, the North Korean foreign ministry notably focused more on the idea of THAAD as a regional issue, rather than a direct threat to Pyongyang.

"What the U.S. seeks in this deployment is to create favorable conditions for containing China and Russia, its strategic rivals, pursuant to its strategy for dominating the world," the spokesman the official KCNA news agency said. "The THAAD deployment would establish a new Cold War structure in Northeast Asia and the peninsula will be again exposed to the danger of being reduced to the theater of a war of big powers." In addition, a spokesman for Pyongyang's National Peace Committee said. "North Korea dismisses the United States' plans to deploy the THAAD missile defense system in South Korea as a dangerous military provocation."

## China

China and Russia argue that it would undermine stability and could trigger an arms race in a delicately balanced region, while the United States insists THAAD is a deterrent necessitated by the North's advancing ballistic missile program.

China is very sensitive about THAAD deployment. China urges South Korea's government not to allow the U.S. to deploy THAAD on their soil due to the fact that China's security will be threatened by the vulnerability of their defense posture by the X-band radar with a range of 1,800 km and the capability to reach inland China, including Beijing.



During his July 3, 2014 visit to Seoul, it is known that President Xi Jinping expressed his negative position by arguing that Korea is a sovereign state, “In the event of the U.S. THAAD deployment to Korea in the name of protection of U.S. soldiers, South Korea as sovereign state should protest it.”<sup>9</sup>

China announced that deployment of this system in South Korea is a threat to China's security and can lead to serious economic and political consequences for Chinese-Korean relations. In particular, during his visit to Seoul on Feb 4, 2015, Defense Minister Chang Wanquan expressed his worry about the THAAD deployment to the USFK as a high altitude anti-missile system. Therefore, it is estimated that the deployment of THAAD can deteriorate the relations between South Korea and China. China criticizes by saying that South Korea economically makes money from China and then uses that money to take aim at China militarily.

The four major reasons China opposes the deployment of the U.S. THAAD are as follows: first, the deployment has nothing to do with the strengthening of South Korea's missile defense system to cope with North Korea's missile threat; second, preventing the deployment of THAAD in South Korea could further deter the U.S. from deploying other advanced weapon systems in the region; third, gaining some kind of power to restrain the activities of the U.S.-ROK alliance on China's periphery; finally, China perceives that such a deployment may start a new cycle of arms races on the Korean Peninsula. Certainly China's strong opposition is mainly targeted at the United States, which is diverting more military resources to the Asia Pacific region. China needs to counterbalance such a move. The timing to make the decision is also very important to South Korea. If North Korea conducts its fourth nuclear test or launches a long-range missile test fire, South Korea might find it easier to make a decision.<sup>10</sup>

## Russia

As we observed that Russia vehemently opposed the U.S. missile defense in Poland and the Czech Republic in 2009, and Russia has warned the United States against deploying its ballistic missile defense system in South Korea. The Russian foreign ministry said in a statement on March 24, 2015 that such a move could threaten regional security. The U.S. argues that the deployment in South Korea would act as a deterrent to consistent military provocations by North Korea.

The Russian ambassador to South Korea called the proposed deployment of a U.S. missile defense system on the peninsula a security threat to the region. In an interview with Yonhap News Agency in Feb 2015, Alexander Timonin, who served as the ambassador to North Korea until last year, said the deployment of THAAD on the Korean Peninsula would constitute a security threat to both Russia and the wider region.<sup>11</sup>

Ironically, Russia has reached a deal to supply China with the S-400 Triumf missile defense system. The S-400, an upgraded version of the S-300, had previously only been available to the Russian Ministry of Defense. China will be the first foreign buyer. The sophisticated air defense system is capable of shooting down aircraft, both manned and unmanned, and both ballistic and cruise missiles within a range of 400 km.





## Japan

Many Japanese security experts suggest that South Korea's reaction to the U.S. proposal of THAAD deployment is a litmus test on whether South Korea really understands North Korea's threat and wants to make arrangements against North Korea, and whether it is willing to continue the Alliance with the U.S. or prefers to walk the road of a tributary/dependent of the PRC. How will South Korea be able to explain its neglecting THAAD to the U.S. and Japan as a member of their U.S.-ROK-Japan trilateral defense cooperation?<sup>12</sup>

Japan's position would be to side with its ally. The U.S. and Japan continue to support the current U.S.-ROK-Japan trilateral defense cooperation against North Korea who they recognize as a common threat. Japan will simultaneously make efforts to normalize its relations with North Korea in order to promote regional stability and protect its own security. Japan also pursues security cooperation with Australia, India, and other Asian and European countries in addition to its alliance with the U.S.

THAAD deployment in South Korea would improve the trilateral military cooperation system within South Korea, the U.S. and Japan, functionally against North Korea's nuclear and missile threat.

## Pros Position on THAAD Deployment

The necessity of THAAD deployment should be addressed in terms of political and diplomatic, strategic security, military strategy, and operational employment. First, from the political and diplomatic perspective, the U.S.-China hegemony rivalry has an immense impact on South Korea's foreign and security policy related to the THAAD issue. The power transition will heavily depend on a great power's will and capabilities as a responsible great power to manage international security and peace.

It seems highly unlikely that the power transition will be shifted from the U.S. to China. Economically, the energy boom by shale gas and the substantial reduction of unemployment will enable the U.S. to retain the global military hegemony until 2050. In the meantime, the turbulent financial trend will badly impact China's economy. In addition, corruption issues, huge development gap between urban and rural areas as well as coastal regions and inland areas, minority ethnic issues, the gender and generation gap, neighboring countries' response against China's artificial islands, and international perception toward China's "One belt, One road" policy, can all have tremendous impacts on China's position.

Considering all of the above mentioned points, it seems highly unlikely that the strategic power transition will be shifted from the U.S. to China.<sup>13</sup> The ROK foreign and security policy should not be shaken by an unfeasible power transition theory.

In addition, if the South Korean government will cooperate with the U.S deployment of THAAD, then it may hamper regional peace since such cooperation can lead South Korea to join



the U.S.-Japan missile defense systems, and consequently, collaborative systems among China, Russia and North Korea could be strengthened to counter act it. This dual trilateral block rivalry will reemerge as a neo-Cold War structure. Opponents insist that the deployment of the U.S. THAAD is not consistent with the Northeast Peace Cooperation Initiative pursued by the Park Geun-hye administration. This criticism should be aware of the serious situation created by North Korea, which attempts to develop ICBMs with miniaturized nuclear warheads. That is not only threatening the U.S. but also China and Russia. Once North Korea successfully test-fires an ICBM which can reach the CONUS, then North Korea could be beyond China's control. If North Korea passes nuclear technology to Uyghur and Tibet, then China will face an incredibly serious situation. Beijing and Vladivostok are actually not safe from nuclear war on the Peninsula. In the event of a North Korea contingency, radioactive contamination in the vicinity of Youngbyun Nuclear site similar to the case of Fukushima incident as nuclear state with long range missile fire capability can be considered as a great threat to China and the region. Thus, China and Russia have a mutual interest in stopping North Korea's nuclear and missile development.

Second, South Korea should cope with China's intent to create a wedge in the ROK-U.S. alliance in order to decrease the amount of U.S. influence on the Korean peninsula and eventually induce South Korea to join the Chinese order. If South Korea will not cooperate with the U.S. to deploy THAAD to the Korean theater due to China's opposition, this could be interpreted as South Korea's obedience to China. This might subsequently dismantle the ROK-U.S. alliance which is what China really wants to see. Then China would be in a position to control South Korea. In the meantime, it is noteworthy that a solid ROK-U.S. alliance allows South Korea to exercise leverage over China. Assuming that South Korea fundamentally shifts from a national security strategy based on the ROK-U.S. alliance to the ROK-China alliance, then that scenario might be possible. However, the assumption is perfectly rootless. China is a country controlled by the Communist Party as opposed to universal values such as liberal democracy, rule of law and human rights, and furthermore there is the China-North Korea alliance, so those factors will never enable South Korea to establish an alliance with China. The scenario is not only infeasible but also unacceptable.

Third, in terms of military strategy, along with an extended deterrence strategy symbolizing power projection such as the nuclear umbrella, conventional combat power, and missile defense, the tailored deterrence strategy (TDS) through on-spot deployment of THAAD to the Korean theater should reinforce the effective strategy to eliminate North Korea's nuclear and missile threat. In particular, North Korea has struggled to continue to increase its missile accuracy. If ROK-U.S. combined forces can not destroy North Korea's long range missiles, it allows North Korea to strike sea ports and air bases in Japan, Guam, Hawaii, Alaska and the Continental U.S. of from which deployments are made to the Korean peninsula. North Korea has made every effort to develop weapon systems such as cyber war and drones for a four dimensional war.

Finally, in terms of operational employment, the ROK-U.S. intelligence community could share real time high-valued target information through interoperability in terms of THAAD deployment along with AN/TPY-2 radar. In the event of war, THAAD will enable the ROK-U.S.



Combined Forces Command (CFC) to retain the USFK assets which will be essential for protecting the functionality of Seoul and defending the Republic of Korea.<sup>14</sup>

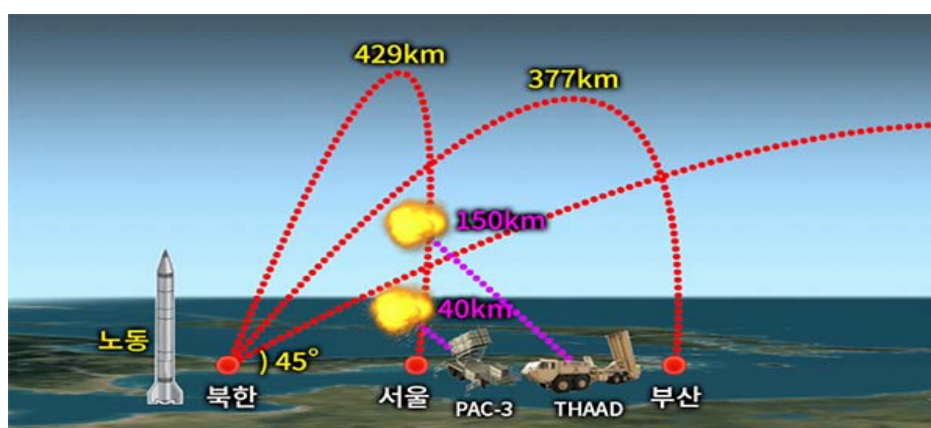
In addition, it will be inevitable for CFC to cope with a potential Chinese missile attack in the event of war on the peninsula. Regardless of China's support and considering the 'Seven Days War Plan' by the North Korean People's Army, we cannot rule out the possibility of an outbreak of another war on the peninsula. If North Korea kicks off large-scale offensive operations and ROK-U.S. combined forces conduct counter-offensive operations via momentum at the initial stage of war, China could fire missiles against the ROK-U.S. combined forces to prevent the maneuver which might threaten China's security. THAAD should prepare for the contingency to neutralize China's missile fire.

## Cons Position and Its Arguments on THAAD Deployment

In terms of opposition to THAAD's deployment, people point out the feasibility of the THAAD weapon system which aims at destroying missiles in flight at 100km altitude. North Korea will likely fire low altitude missiles rather than medium and high altitude. They insist that THAAD is not an appropriate weapons system against the low or medium altitude missiles. They continue to insist that North Korea will highly likely employ AN-2 or drones as delivery systems of nuclear warheads and the long-range artillery threat is more serious.

If North Korea fires the 1,300km-range Rodong missile using a High-Lofted Turning Angle, then its range of 650km can cover the whole territory of South Korea, the peak altitude of 430km, fly fall speed at Maha 7 induces catastrophically high casualties and loss in comparison with FROGs and/or SCUDs. PAC-2, or 3 is not enough against this kind of severe missile fire. THAAD is essential against the medium and high altitude missiles to prevent mass casualties and critical assets via a multi-layered missile defense system.

**Figure 2. Anti-Missile System in the Event of North Korea Medium, High Altitude Missile Attack**



Source: <http://newstapa.org/1509>.



Second, China criticizes that the deployment of THAAD on Korean soil by saying it may threaten its national security. THAAD itself is not designed to aim at shooting down ICBMs since the altitude of 40-150km is far below 1,000km, the peak in flight. THAAD is not an anti-missile weapon system against ICBMs in terms of altitude and speed in the boost phase. Is it true that the deployment severely threatens China's national security? Is the U.S. deploying THAAD to Korea in order to intercept China's Inter-continental Ballistic Missile? In the event of China's firing of an ICBM toward the U.S., a flight track which passes through the arctic, not above the Korean peninsula, is the short cut from the firing site to targeted area which is the nature of ballistic missiles. That is why the opposition position related to the U.S. attempt to deploy its THAAD in order to strike China's ICBM is not logical.

AN/TPY 2 as X-band radar might be a problem. Since the U.S. already deployed Forward Based Mode with a detection range of 1,800km in Guam, the U.S. can identify strategic weapons disposition in mainland China. The U.S. has already employed the Defense Support Program (DSP) with early warning satellite to detect China's strategic weapons systems including ICBMs. Terminal Based Mode with 600 km of detection is designed to aim at destroying ballistic missiles in the terminal phase. The U.S. will plan to strictly deploy TBM X-band radar against North Korea's nuclear and missiles.

Third, one of the primary reasons for opposition regarding THAAD deployment is to worry about potential economic retaliation by China. In accordance with *The Year 2014 ROK's Trade* by the Korea International Trade Association, South Korea recorded 235.4 billion dollars in trade with China, out of 1.982 trillion dollars of total 2014 trade. This accounts for 21.4 percent of global ROK trade. The 235.4 billion dollars trade between the ROK and China overshadows the 201.6 billion dollars of trade with the U.S. and Japan combined (115.6 billion dollars between ROK-U.S. and 86 billion dollars trade between ROK-Japan).<sup>15</sup> In particular, the ROK earned 55.2 billion dollars in profits in 2014 derived from China. This means that China has a tremendous influence on the economy of the ROK. Therefore, if China reacts with economic sanctions in the event of THAAD deployment, then their bad relationship could adversely threaten the South Korean economy and impede Chinese support and cooperation as South Korea manages North Korean issues. However, national security is more vital than national economic interest.

## Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The basic pillar of the Republic of Korea's national security is the ROK-U.S. combined defense systems. THAAD deployment to the Korean theater is one of the essential factors in maintaining the robust ROK-U.S. combined readiness posture by protecting the soldiers and combat assets against the increasingly direct North Korea nuclear and missile threat. It is also vital for the combined defense system to ensure national survival against the face of catastrophic casualties in the event of a nuclear and/or missile attack. It is noteworthy that North Korea has adopted nuclear doctrine as an offensive means delivered by ballistic missile. To physically deploy THAAD on Ko-



rean soil as a tailored deterrence strategy against North Korean nuclear missile attack is inevitable. At the same time, the ROK should warn North Korea to ensure that the increasing nuclear missile capabilities will enforce the U.S. decision to deploy THAAD.

In order to cope with the Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile threat, the ROK-U.S. combined intelligence community should keep track of SLBMs. The ROK and U.S. as allies should publicly proclaim to North Korea, “If North Korea attempts to kick off maritime navigation in order to attack with SLBMs, the ROK-U.S. combined forces will promptly conduct preemptive strikes against the SLBMs in the vicinity of naval ports.”

The THAAD system is a defensive anti-missile weapon system at the terminal stage of ballistic missile, not an offensive weapon system to threaten or conduct surveillance against neighboring countries including China and Russia.

The deployment of the THAAD for the USFK and the acquisition of THAAD for the ROK are a totally different story. Since, the ROK forces adopted the Kill-chain and KAMD system as the counter measures against North Korea’s nuclear and missile threat, the ROK should faithfully implement this concept and policy. The South Korean government should clearly eliminate the prejudice of subsequent scenarios after the deployment of the THAAD to USFK might induce South Korea to purchase THAAD. Unless the Koreanization of weapon systems is achieved, the defense industry will never contribute to South Korea’s economy, and furthermore, the Koreanization of South Korea’s national defense will never be achieved.

The U.S. should officially make a request to the ROK government for the deployment of THAAD to Korea to prevent further debates on the issue between allies in an undesirable manner. In that sense, the U.S. should ensure AN/TPY 2, Terminal based mode (600 km range), not Forward based Mode (1,800 km range), will be deployed to South Korea to prevent any misunderstanding.

South Korea should talk with China regarding the THAAD issue. For China, it is not appropriate to intervene in the security of another sovereign nation. Considering that China contracted procurement of S-400 anti-missile weapons from Russia, China’s opposition to the deployment of THAAD to the peninsula is ironic. THAAD deployment will deter war by containing the employment of nuclear missiles, which will eventually contribute to China’s security and interest. China should proactively provide North Korea with a nuclear umbrella which can lead North Korea to eventually abandon its nuclear program, like the ROK abandoned its nuclear program due to the U.S. nuclear umbrella. In addition, China should make a commitment to abide by the UN sanctions related to North Korea’s nuclear missile development. China should not have exported large truck vehicles for TEL to North Korea. China should take more firm and powerful control measures against illegal arms trafficking including restriction of equipments crossing the international border between North Korea and China.

South Korea should continue to conduct Track 1.5 military talks with China, including retired officers talks and strategic trilateral talks among the ROK-U.S.-China to discuss sensitive security issues such as those on the peninsula.



Subsequently, North Korea should be aware that North Korea's nuclear blackmail and preemptive strike strategy is a war facilitator, not a war deterrent. North Korea's increasing nuclear missile capabilities will lead to continued UN economic sanctions, which make it impossible for North Korea to achieve nuclear armament in parallel with economic development.

The Republic of Korea should reform its military structure to integrate Kill-chain and KAMD systems in a multilayer defense concept at the terminal phase against a North Korea nuclear missile. Offensive and defensive weapon systems are not enough to defend South Korea against the North Korea nuclear missile threat. Synchronized countermeasures such as command structure, unit structure, combat power structure, and force structure should be developed.

First, it is recommended that ROK Joint Missile Defense Command and Combined Air Defense Command be established and the Army Air Defense School and Air Force be reactivated as a Joint Missile School in order to implement common air defense operation concepts and procedures. Second, Joint Missile Defense Command should be a unified command system. Unit structure should be reorganized at missile sites from the battalion level unit, not independent units, to brigades consisting of an operation unit and supporting units. Third, combat power structure should procure Pac-3 ERINT, M-SAM, and L-SAM as multilayer air defense systems at the terminal stage. South Korea should facilitate the development process of those weapon systems. Fourth, force structure employing weapons should be organized by professional cadres with high sophisticated skill and periodic air defense exercise and training based on this model.

President Park Geun-hye's message in an interview on June 6, 2015 with the Washington Post said, "We would look at [THAAD] together with the U.S., taking into consideration a variety of elements, including whether it serves our national security interest. When it comes to security, it shouldn't be about 'yes or no' depending on the position of certain countries. The first priority should be how we can best safeguard the Korean people." It is expected that President Park's message could terminate the controversial argument on the deployment of THAAD to the U.S. forces in Korea. ■



## Endnotes

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Kyung-young Chung is Director of the Institute of Foreign & Security Policy on East Asia, and taught national security courses at the Korea National Defense University and the Catholic University of Korea. He graduated from the Korea Military Academy. He received a Master of Science in Systems Management at the University of Southern California and a Master of Military Arts and Science at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, respectively. He received his Ph.D. in International Politics at the University of Maryland College Park.

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