

U.S. continues to adjust readiness to meet N. Korean threats: Pentagon

WASHINGTON, April 8 (Yonhap) — The United States and South Korea continue to adjust their joint defense capabilities to meet ever increasing threats from North Korea's advancing nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities, a Pentagon spokesperson said Friday.

Department of Defense Press Secretary John Kirby also highlighted the importance of South Korea-U.S. joint training exercises.

"All our training events are meant to improve our readiness," the spokesperson said when asked if a U.S.-South Korea joint military exercise, set to be held later this month, was meant to send a strong signal to the North.

"It's not about message sending. It's about readiness, and that's our commitment on the peninsula. That's our commitment to our South Korean allies," he added.

The remarks come after the South Korean defense ministry said it will discuss with the U.S. about the possible deployment of U.S. strategic assets to South Korea amid North Korea's continued missile launches.

Pyongyang staged 12 rounds of missile tests this year, including seven rounds in January alone that marked the largest number of missile launches it has conducted in a single month.

They also come after North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's sister, Kim Yo-jong, said the North may use nuclear weapons if attacked by South Korea or the U.S.

"We are well aware of the North Koreans', their efforts to advance their nuclear ambitions, as well as to advance their ballistic missile capabilities," said Kirby.

"We don't need to hear threats and threatening comments from North Korean leaders to understand the actual threat that Pyongyang represents to the peninsula and to the region. And that's why we are continuing to adjust our posture as needed, to adjust our intelligence gathering posture as needed, and

certainly to adjust our training and readiness with our South Korean allies,” he added.

Source: <https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20220409000300325>

[Disclaimer]