**US Department of State**

## **Secretary Kerry's Meeting With Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Munich**

Office of the Spokesperson

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[**http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/02/252433.htm**](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2016/02/252433.htm)

From Spokesperson John Kirby:

Secretary Kerry met today in Munich with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. Meeting on the margins of the Munich Security Conference, the two ministers discussed ongoing efforts at the United Nations to enact measures which address continued violations by the DPRK of multiple UN Security Council Resolutions.

The Secretary reaffirmed U.S. commitments to security and stability on the Korean peninsula and urged China to use their influence in Pongyang to help the international community increase pressure on the DPRK.

Both ministers reiterated their support for the six-party process and for achieving the complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The Secretary noted that the onus remains on the DPRK to return‎ to that process.

Finally, the Secretary addressed China's efforts to deal with trafficking in persons. He also thanked the Foreign Minister for China's support for the global climate change agreement and invited China to participate in the next Our Oceans conference in Washington, DC this year.

Daily Press Briefing by Press Secretary Josh Earnest, 2/8/2016

The White House

James S. Brady Press Briefing Room

12:46 P.M. EST

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/02/09/daily-press-briefing-press-secretary-josh-earnest-282016>

Q I’m wondering if you could talk a little bit about what the White House is considering in terms of the response to the North Korea nuclear test -- or rather, the test that we saw over the weekend. And how strongly is consideration being given to placing the THAAD missile defense system in South Korea?  
  
MR. EARNEST:   
As it relates to discussions about the THAAD -- for those following along at home, that’s the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense System -- this is essentially an anti-missile system. And as a result of this launch, the United States has begun formal consultations with our allies in South Korea about moving equipment and technology that could support a THAAD system into South Korea to protect our allies there. So we’re obviously interested in having formal discussions about that, and we’ll keep you posted as those negotiations move forward.  
  
Q And did the President discuss that aspect -- specifically, the THAAD system on the Peninsula -- with President Xi when he spoke with him? I mean, you’ve outlined that everyone agrees that this is provocative and destabilizing. But how much agreement is there on the response?  
  
MR. EARNEST: Well, there certainly is an agreement about the fact about an impactful response being necessary. That means considering a range of economic sanctions that would further isolate North Korea. And it would also mean a clear signal -- or I guess an additional clear signal to the North Koreans that the resolve of the international community here is firm.   
  
And we certainly have welcomed the statements that we’ve seen from President Xi and other senior Chinese officials about how they find North Korea’s provocative actions just as intolerable as we do. And we’re going to continue to work closely with the Chinese and our other allies in Asia to respond. What’s notable about the Chinese is they probably have closer relations with the North Koreans than anybody else. That means that they have unique influence with the North Koreans. And we certainly will work with them as they make decisions about how to use that influence to try to nudge the North Koreans in a direction that’s less destabilizing and less provocative.

Q Thanks, Josh. You mentioned that you welcome President Xi’s statements on the North Korea launch. But in the past, one reason why they haven’t put a lot of pressure on North Korea, or as much pressure as everyone else seems to like, is because they’re afraid of increasing U.S. influence in that region. And they’ve already summoned the South Korean ambassador, obviously angry about the possibility of THAAD going there. So why do you think that they’re going to put pressure on North Korea for real this time?  
  
MR. EARNEST: Well, in some ways -- well, I think I was careful not to predict exactly what steps the Chinese government will take in response to this particular launch. I’ll let them announce what steps they believe are necessary. Obviously, we’ve been engaged in a number of private conversations with them about what an appropriate response would be, including between President Obama and President Xi.  
  
As it relates to the THAAD deployment, we’ve made quite clear that the deployment of that equipment and that technology is geared solely at the risk that is posed by North Korea. South Korea is a treaty ally of the United States, and we take those obligations quite seriously. We’re committed to the security of South Korea, and that is exactly what this technology is intended to address, which is the threat that emanates from North Korea.  
  
Q So do you think China is going to put significant pressure on North Korea to the point that it could make a difference?  
  
MR. EARNEST: Well, let’s take that in a couple different ways. The first is, given China’s relationship with North Korea, they certainly are better positioned to do that than anybody else. Secondly, if you look at the public statements that have come from China just in the last 24 or 36 hours, I think they’ve made quite clear in their public statements that they find the situation in North Korea untenable. The kind of provocations and destabilizing actions from the North Koreans is something that the Chinese are quite concerned about. And they have engaged in good-faith conversations with us about the most effective way to respond, and we’re going to continue to have those conversations, not just bilaterally but also in the context of ongoing discussions at the United Nations.  
  
Q Okay. And the way Ambassador Power described what needs to happen yesterday -- she called it “decisive action,” “urgency,” it needs to be impactful, “tough, unprecedented measures,” “breaking new ground,” and “not business as usual.” So given that economic sanctions have very little effect on North Korea because of their economy, I mean, does this really have to come from China? What other sanction, or what other method do you think would actually have an impact?  
  
MR. EARNEST: I think this is material to the discussion that they’re having at the United Nations right now, even as we speak, among not just the United States and China but other relevant players in the region, some of whom serve on the United Nations Security Council, and some of whom have a clearly vested interest, like Japan and South Korea.  
  
So these topics are under discussion. But again, there’s no denying the important role that China has to play here, given the fact that they’ve got more of a relationship with North Korea than anyone else.  
  
Q Is the White House pleased with the actions that China has taken?  
  
MR. EARNEST: I’ll just note that the Chinese did send a high-ranking government official to go to North Korea just last week to discuss the international community’s concerns with some of their provocative actions.  
  
Q But the launch happened anyway.  
  
MR. EARNEST: But, again, if it goes to whether or not China is taking this seriously, I think that is one data point to indicate to you that they are. And I think the strong public statements that we’ve seen from high-ranking Chinese officials is another indication that they take this quite seriously. I think the frequent telephone conversations between President Obama and President Xi should be a third indication that they take this quite seriously. The fact that this ends up on the agenda when the two leaders meet even when we’re not talking just days after provocative action from the North Koreans is another indication that the Chinese view the North Korean situation as a significant one.  
  
But the questions are, how can the Chinese use their influence to advance the interests of the entire international community? And, again, that’s among the discussions that are underway right now at the United Nations.  
  
Q And as the President will be meeting with other Asian leaders later this week, does North Korea become more of an agenda item now?  
  
MR. EARNEST: It certainly could. The countries that have the most significant stake in this particular situation are countries in Northeast Asia, but I’m confident that there are other Asian countries that are noticing the actions of the North Koreans, and so I wouldn’t rule out this could be a topic of conversation when the President travels to California later this week.

I think the second thing is, as I was mentioning to Margaret, there are a number of indications -- again, just based on what we have seen publicly from the Chinese -- that they take this situation quite seriously. They don’t do that because the United States puts pressure on them. They do that because they’re concerned about the impact of North Korea’s destabilizing activities on their own national security.   
  
This is an area, though, where the interests of -- at least some of the interests of the United States and China are aligned. And that’s why we’ve been able to work together to coordinate our response. We also want to make sure that response is coordinated with Russia, who has a stake in this outcome, and of course, coordinated with our treaty allies in Japan and in South Korea.   
  
Q Are they sort of playing both sides of the issue? I don’t want to say they’re two-faced, but it seems like, on the one hand, they’re saying all the right things publicly, but on the other hand, they don’t seem to be getting much of a reaction out of Pyongyang, either. Are they ineffective also?  
  
MR. EARNEST: First of all, in this case, I think given the consistency of their public comments and given I think pretty -- what appears to be obvious from the outside is that China doesn’t significantly benefit from the destabilizing provocative behavior of the North Koreans.

# Department of Defense Press Briefing by Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook in the Pentagon Briefing Room

Press Operations

Pentagon Press Secretary Peter Cook  
February 8, 2016

<http://www.defense.gov/News/News-Transcripts/Transcript-View/Article/652384/department-of-defense-press-briefing-by-pentagon-press-secretary-peter-cook-in>

PETER COOK: Afternoon, everyone. Hope you enjoyed your Super Bowl Sunday.

The goal of the formal consultations is to bilaterally explore the feasibility of THAAD deploying to and operating on the Korean Peninsula at the earliest possible date. As General Scaparrotti said this weekend, THAAD would add an important capability in a layered and effective missile defense.

The bilateral discussions that will occur underscore the ironclad commitment of the United States to defend the Republic of Korea. If the THAAD system were deployed to the Korean Peninsula, it would be focused solely on North Korea, contribute to a layered missile defense that would enhance the alliance's existing missile-defense capabilities against potential North Korean missile threats.

And with that, I'd be happy to take your questions.

Bob?

Q: Peter, a question for you on the Korea announcement you mentioned. With regard to the consultations, it said that to be -- if it's deployed, to be deployed at the earliest possible date. Does Secretary Carter have any kind of time table in mind? Is he talking about before the end of the year or before the end of the month? And are there any other kinds of military actions or preparations or adjustments that are being contemplated or being made with regard to Korea?

MR. COOK: Well, first of all, on the -- on the last part of your question there, you have to remember, we are constantly assessing the security threat posed by North Korean in consultation with our South Korean

MR. COOK: Jim, we're in a situation now where we have at the U.N. Security Council not just the United States, but Russia and China condemning this action. Clearly, this is something that requires an international response as well. But in the meantime, we're going to continue to do what we need to do to protect the United States, to protect our allies.

This country continues to pose a threat. Its actions over the weekend only enhance that position. So we're going to continue to do what we need to do to protect the United States, our citizens and our allies at the same time.

Q: So, between the United States and South Korea agreed, talking about the THAAD missile issues?

MR. COOK: Yes. There's been an alliance decision to begin those consultations -- a working group first would discuss, again, the specifics about any potential deployment.

Yes, Paul?

Q: Peter, the Chinese -- going back to the THAAD missile system, the Chinese government has expressed some concerns about any additional missile shield on the peninsula. Have they brought those concerns to the department? And are they going to come up during the ongoing negotiations with the South Koreans?

MR. COOK: I'm not aware of any direct communication we've received from the Chinese here at the Department of Defense. I'll refer you to the State Department, if they've had any consultations or any -- any word from the Chinese.

But again, this is a system that, as we've pointed out, would be focused -- a defensive system put in place to deal with the threat posed by North Korea, in addition to the layered missile defense that we already have in place. And so we don't believe that it should pose any sort of concern to the Chinese.

Q: -- given that North Korea reacts badly to even the most innocuous U.S. military moves -- just routine exercises -- it often decries them as provocative and warlike -- what would you anticipate their response would be to this potential deployment of THAAD?

And what would the response from the Pentagon be to what I think we can anticipate will be bellicose statements from Pyongyang about this deployment, which you have made clear is a defensive deployment?

MR. COOK: Well, I just reiterate, this is a defensive system put in place because of North Korean actions; most recently, the launch from -- from over the weekend.

Q: Is there any risk to I guess increase tension when there's already issues like the South China Sea?

MR. COOK: There is a risk of increasing tension, thanks to the actions of the North Koreans, and we believe that they have done -- taken a provocative -- another provocative action here, which, again, only destabilizes the -- the situation on the -- further destabilizes the situation on the Korean Peninsula.

And the Chinese have condemned their actions. We have condemned their actions. This is -- it is the North Koreans who are raising these tensions, and we are considering now, again, this move with our South Korean allies to enhance the defense, the security posture of South Korea -- of our own forces that are in the region, and our allies -- other allies and partners in the region, as well.

Q: I just had a quick follow-up on Tara’s question on China. Could you explicitly say that the THAAD system will not be looking into China? Why isn't it -- why shouldn't other countries be concerned about it? The system is -- is highly capable --

MR. COOK: It's going to be focused on the threat posed by North Korea.

Q: Not aimed at China at all?

MR. COOK: This is a -- this is an alliance decision that we're making with South Korean and we're doing this in response to what the North Koreans have done, and that's how it should be viewed.