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Joint Leaders Statement on AUKUS

SEPTEMBER 15, 2021 / STATEMENTS AND RELEASES

<AUKUS> 윤재형

As leaders of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, guided by our enduring ideals and shared commitment to the international rules-based order, we resolve to deepen diplomatic, security, and defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, including by working with partners, to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. As part of this effort, we are announcing the creation of an enhanced trilateral security partnership called “AUKUS” – Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Through AUKUS, our governments will strengthen the ability of each to support our security and defense interests, building on our longstanding and ongoing bilateral ties. **We will promote deeper information and technology sharing.** We will foster deeper integration of security and defense-related science, technology, industrial bases, and supply chains. And in particular, we will significantly deepen cooperation on a range of security and defense capabilities.

As the first initiative under AUKUS, recognizing our common tradition as maritime democracies, **we commit to a shared ambition to support Australia in acquiring nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy.** Today, we embark on a trilateral effort of 18 months to seek an optimal pathway to deliver this capability. We will leverage expertise from the United States and the United Kingdom, building on the two countries’ submarine programs to bring an Australian capability into service at the earliest achievable date.

The development of Australia’s nuclear-powered submarines would be a joint endeavor between the three nations, with a focus on interoperability, commonality, and mutual benefit. Australia is committed to adhering to the highest standards for safeguards, transparency, verification, and accountancy measures to ensure the non-proliferation, safety, and security of nuclear material and technology. Australia remains committed to fulfilling all of its obligations as a non-nuclear weapons state, including with the International Atomic Energy Agency. Our three nations are deeply committed to **upholding our leadership on global non-proliferation.**

Recognizing our deep defense ties, built over decades, today we also embark on

further trilateral collaboration under AUKUS to enhance our joint capabilities and interoperability. These initial efforts will focus on cyber capabilities, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, and additional undersea capabilities.

The endeavor we launch today will help sustain peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. For more than 70 years, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, have worked together, along with other important allies and partners, to protect our shared values and promote security and prosperity. Today, with the formation of AUKUS, we recommit ourselves to this vision.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/press-briefings/2021/09/15/background-press-call-on-aukus/>

Background Press Call on AUKUS
SEPTEMBER 15, 2021 / PRESS BRIEFINGS
<AUKUS>

Now, to quickly get into the topic of what we are discussing today: As you know, at 5:00 p.m., **President Biden** will be delivering remarks. He will be delivering remarks alongside **Prime Minister Morrison of Australia and Prime Minister Johnson of the UK**, and **they will be announcing the creation of a new trilateral security partnership between our three nations focused on the Indo-Pacific region.** The partnership is named **AUKUS – that is A-U-K-U-S.**

I think this is an historic announcement. **It reflects the Biden administration's determination to build stronger partnerships to sustain peace and stability across the entire Indo-Pacific region.** This new architecture is really about deepening cooperation on a range of defense capabilities for the 21st century.

And again, these relationships with Great Britain and Australia are time tested – our oldest allies, generally. **This is designed not only to strengthen our capabilities in the Indo-Pacific but to link Europe, and particularly Great Britain, more closely with our strategic pursuits in the region as a whole.**

This new architecture, this new alignment is about collaborating on joint capabilities and pursuing deeper interoperability. And you will see several things: One, we will announce a new architecture of meetings and engagements among our senior defense and foreign policy officials to share perspectives, to align views. But we will also announce efforts to spur cooperation across many new and emerging arenas – cyber; AI – particularly applied AI; quantum technologies; and some undersea capabilities as well.

We'll also work to sustain and deepen information and technology sharing, and I think you're going to see a much more dedicated effort to pursue integration of security and defense-related science, technology, and industrial bases, and supply chains. This will be a sustained effort over many years to see how we can marry and merge some of our independent and individual capabilities into greater trilateral engagement as we go forward.

We undertake this effort as part of a larger constellation of steps, including stronger bilateral partnerships with our traditional security partners in Asia –

Japan, South Korea, Thailand, the Philippines – and also stronger engagement with new partners like India, Vietnam, and new formations like the Quad. And, as you know, the Quad will be held in person for this first time next week.

But for AUKUS, in addition to this set of strategic and defense-related steps, our first initiative as part of AUKUS is the three countries will announce, later today, a shared ambition to support Australia's desire to acquire nuclear-powered submarines. And we will launch a trilateral effort of 18 months, which will involve teams – technical and strategic and navy teams – from all three countries to identify the optimal pathway of delivery of this capability.

And I think, as you know, the only country that the United States has shared, traditionally, this kind of nuclear technology for propulsion is Great Britain, and that arrangement dates back to 1958.

We are adding – this is a unique set of circumstances – Australia to that deep partnership to explore the best ways for Australia to pursue nuclear-powered submarines.

I do want to underscore that this will give Australia the capability for their submarines to basically – to deploy for longer periods. They're quieter. They're much more capable. **They will allow us to sustain and to improve deterrence across the Indo-Pacific.**

I do want to underscore that the Biden administration remains deeply committed to American leadership and nonproliferation. This is nuclear propulsion. Australia has no intention of pursuing nuclear weapons. And Australia is, in fact, a leader in all nonproliferation efforts in the NPT and elsewhere.

Australia, again, does not seek and will not seek nuclear weapons; this is about nuclear-powered submarines. But it's a very important initiative that will basically set us on a new course of trilateral cooperation into the 21st century.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Thanks very much. I'll just follow up on what my colleague said about nonproliferation by adding that this partnership is, in many ways, possible because of Australia's longstanding and demonstrated commitment to nuclear nonproliferation.

The partnership is going to be taken fully consistent with our respective nonproliferation obligations over the next 18 months during this consultation period.

Our shared objective is to maintain the strength of the nonproliferation regime and Australia's exemplary nonproliferation credentials. That will be central to the discussion. And, you know, as we embark on the effort for the next 18 months, we will be engaged fully with the IAEA.

Q Thank you so much for doing this call. I understand that you're saying that this move is – I understand that you're saying that this move is not about any one country. But, obviously, I would think that these are – these are submarines. This is about national security, when you're talking about enforcing rules and, you know, a rules-based order, and talking about having submarines that have more stealth capabilities.

That clearly seems like this is about security matters and this is about military threat. And it would seem like the only country that is not involved would be China. **So, I guess, can you talk more about – it seems like this is a military move aimed at China. How can it not be?**

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Look, I have nothing further to add than what I've said. **This is not aimed at any one country. This is about a larger effort to sustain the fabric of engagement and deterrence in the Indo-Pacific.**

We have a history of innovation, upgrading capabilities. I would urge you to look at it in this context. And I would simply say that I think one of the things that the United States has done most effectively in the Indo-Pacific is to secure peace and stability and to be the ultimate guarantor of that rules-based order.

I think it'd be fair to say, over the last several years, there have been questions: Does the United States still have the stomach? Do we have the wit and wisdom that we want to continue to play that role?

What President Biden is saying with this initiative is: Count us in. We are all in for a deeper, sustained commitment to the Indo-Pacific, and we recognize that our – one of our critical roles is indeed the maintenance of peace and stability there.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/04/05/aucus-leaders-level-statement/>

AUKUS Leaders' Level Statement

APRIL 05, 2022 / STATEMENTS AND RELEASES

We are pleased with the progress in our trilateral program for Australia to establish a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability. We are fully committed to establishing a robust approach to sharing naval propulsion technology with Australia that strengthens the global non-proliferation regime.

https://m.hani.co.kr/arti/international/international_general/1018316.html

핵무기 없는 호주에 핵잠수함...‘오커스’에 흔들리는 핵비확산체제

미국과 영국, 오스트레일리아(호주)가 2021년 9월15일 출범을 발표한 3국 안보결사체 ‘오커스’(AUKUS)의 후폭풍이 이어지고 있다. 호주가 77조원 규모의 디젤 잠수함 계약을 일방적으로 파기해 뒤통수를 맞은 프랑스의 반발, 남중국해에서 호주의 영향력 확대를 우려하는 아세안(ASEAN) 국가들의 불편한 심기가 사그라들지 않는다. 무엇보다 핵무기 없는 호주가 핵추진 잠수함을 보유하도록 지원하겠다는 미국과 영국의 변심에 핵전문가들은 충격을 받고 있다. 전례 없는 이번 조치로 어렵게 지켜내고 있는 국제 핵비확산체제가 흔들릴 수 있기 때문이다.

조 바이든 미국 대통령, 보리스 존슨 영국 총리, 스콧 모리슨 호주 총리 등의 발언을 종합하면 핵추진잠수함은 호주 남부 애들레이드에서 3국 협력으로 건조할 예정이며, 미국과 영국은 앞으로 18개월 동안 호주에 기술·전략팀을 보내 세부사항을 협의한다. 호주는 자체적으로 고농축우라늄(HEU)을 생산하지 않으며, 핵추진잠수함에 핵무기를 탑재하지 않는다.

하지만 전문가들은 이런 발표 내용이 핵확산 위험에 대한 우려를 불식할 수는 없다고 지적한다. 세계적으로 손꼽히는 핵전문가 프랭크 폰히펠 미국 프린스턴대학 명예교수와 조지 무어 미들버리 국제학연구소 상임연구원이 직격탄을 날렸다. 두 학자는 오커스 발표 일주일 뒤 미국 정치 전문매체 <더힐> 공동기고문을 통해 “중국에 대한 대응이라는 이익이 핵무기 비확산 체제에 미치는 부정적 효과를 상쇄하지 못한다”고 비판했다.

첫째, 호주의 핵추진잠수함이 HEU를 연료로 사용하는 데 따른 핵확산 위험을 꼽을 수 있다. 미국과 영국의 핵추진잠수함은 우라늄235를 93~97% 정도로 고농축한 우라늄(HEU)을 추진 연료로 사용한다. 호주가 자체적으로 농축우라늄을 생산하지 않겠다고 했으므로 미·영의 지원을 받는 호주의 핵추진잠수함도 당연히 미국이 공급하는 HEU를 원료로 쓸 것이다. 문제는 농도 90% 이상의 우라늄이 곧바로 핵무기를 만드는 데 사용할 수 있다는 점이다. 통상적으로 민수용 원자료가 3.5%로 저농축한 우라늄(LEU)을 사용하는 것에 비춰보면 HEU가 얼마나 위험한 핵물질인지 짐작할 수 있다.

HEU가 언제든지 핵무기 제조에 전용될 위험이 있기 때문에 미국은 전세계적으로 HEU 사용을 줄이겠다는 확고한 원칙을 지켜왔다. 예를 들어 미국과 소련은 냉전 시기에 수십 개 나라의 연구용 원자로에 무기급 HEU를 공급했는데, 미국은 9·11 테러 이후 수십억달러를 투입해 이를 LEU로 바꿔왔다. 두 과학자가 “지금 다시 무기급 우라늄을 핵비무장국에 수출하는 것은 얼마나 어리석은 일인가”라고 탄식하는 이유다.

실제로 호주의 HEU 사용을 제대로 사찰·검증하려면 상당한 실무적 어려움이 따를 수 있다. 세바스티앵 필리프 프린스턴대학 연구부교수는 9월17일 핵과학자회보에 올린 글에서 “호주가 6~12척의 핵추진잠수함을 30년간 운용하려면 3~6톤가량의 HEU가 필요하다”고 예상했다. 그는 이어 국제원자력기구(IAEA)가 이란의 HEU 획득을 막기 위해 고군분투하고 있는데, 그 양은 핵무기 한 개를 만드는 데 필요한 25kg(0.025톤)에 지나지 않는다고 지적했다. IAEA가 기밀에 속하는 핵추진잠수함의 원자로 설계 정보에 접근하지 못한 채 핵무기 한 개 제조에 들어

가는 우라늄의 100~200배에 이르는 양을 사찰해야 한다는 것이다. 그는 “IAEA가 그런 솜씨를 부리기가 쉽지 않다”며 “호주 대표단이 방문하면 IAEA 지도부의 목에서 땀이 흘러내릴 것”이라고 꼬집었다.

둘째, 핵무기 비보유국인 호주가 핵잠수함을 운용하는 것은 핵비확산체제의 ‘구멍’을 활용하려는 다른 나라들의 욕구를 부추길 수 있다는 점에서 지극히 위험하다는 지적도 나온다. 제임스 액턴 카네기국제평화재단 행정책 국장은 호주가 핵물질을 오용하느냐 아니냐의 문제가 아니라 “(나쁜) 선례를 남긴 것”이 가장 큰 문제라고 비판한다.

핵확산금지조약(NPT)은 핵무기 비보유국의 핵추진잠수함 건조나 운용을 금지하지는 않는다. 잠수함은 위치 자체가 비밀이고, 수면 밑에 있기 때문에 IAEA 사찰단의 접근이 불가능하다는 현실적인 이유도 있다. 이 때문에 “금지되지 않은 군사활동용”(즉 핵추진잠수함)일 경우 핵물질을 안전조치 대상에서 제외하는 것을 허용하고 있다.

IAEA 안전조치에 이런 구멍이 있지만 어떤 핵비보유국도 핵추진잠수함을 운용한 적은 없다. 캐나다와 브라질이 심각하게 이를 검토했지만 ‘핵확산을 우려한’ 미국과 국제사회의 압력으로 무산됐다. 그동안 NPT의 구멍을 막는 데 앞장섰던 미국이 호주에 “아주 예외적으로” 구멍을 허용한 것을 두고 ‘이중 잣대’라는 비판이 나오는 이유다. 이제 이란, 브라질, 한국 등도 호주 처럼 NPT의 구멍을 활용하려 시도할 수 있다. 액턴 국장은 “오커스 협정은 (핵확산) 억지력을 가진 (IAEA의) 세이프가드(안전조치) 가치를 약화시키고 핵확산 가능성을 높인다”고 우려했다.

셋째, 미·영·호주는 글로벌 비확산 리더십 유지를 위해 노력하겠다고 호주의 핵추진잠수함에 핵무기를 탑재하지 않겠다고 강조했다. 하지만 국제사회에서 ‘영원히 선한 의도’는 존재하지 않는다. 폰히펠과 무어, 두 과학자는 호주도 ‘인도 모델’을 따를 것이라고 내다봤다. 인도는 자체 핵추진잠수함을 건조하기 전에 소련에서 한 척, 이후 소련 붕괴 뒤 러시아에서 한 척을 임대했다. 인도의 핵잠수함 설계는 상당 부분 러시아에서 수입한 두번째 핵추진잠수함에 토대를 두고 있다. 두 과학자는 이번 협정이 호주가 자체 핵추진잠수함 프로그램을 추진하는 커다란 첫발이 될 수 있다고 짚었다. 잠수함은 플랫폼이고, 미-중 경쟁이 더 격화되면 그 위에 핵무기가 얹혀질지 아니면 재래식 무기가 얹혀질지 아무도 장담할 수 없다. 어찌면 미래 어느 시점에 오커스 협정이 부른 핵비확산체제 약화에 대한 대가를 인류가 치러야 할지도 모른다.

