

Is Another North Korea Nuclear Test Imminent? How Will Washington Respond? US Nuclear Attack “On the Table”?

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Global Research, April 22, 2017

Region: [Asia](#)

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#), [Terrorism](#),
[US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [NORTH KOREA](#)

How will Washington respond if another test is conducted? Is US aggression a real or saber-rattling option?

Last month, Secretary of State Tillerson said “(l)et me be very clear. The policy of strategic patience has ended. We are exploring a new range of diplomatic, security and economic measures. All options are on the table.”

“(l)f (North Korea) elevate(s) the threat of their weapons program to a level that we believe requires action, then, (the option of war is) on the table. (A) comprehensive set of capabilities” is being developed.

Last week in Seoul, South Korea, Vice President Pence repeated Tillerson’s warning, adding Pyongyang “would do well not to test (Trump’s) resolve.”

Any DPRK use of nuclear weapons would be met with “an overwhelming and effective response,” he blustered. Trump said US

“patience...in this region has run out and we want to see change.”

“We want to see North Korea abandon its reckless path of the development of nuclear weapons, and also its continual use and testing of ballistic missiles is unacceptable.”

“(E)ither China will deal with this problem or the United States and our allies will?”

Things are fast coming to a head on the Korean peninsula. The USS Carl Vinson aircraft carrier strike group is expected to arrive in the Sea of Japan next week.

On April 25, the DPRK will commemorate the founding of the Korean People’s Army. Will it conduct a sixth nuclear test on this date? If so, how will Washington and China respond?

On April 18, a Beijing-linked [Global Times](#) commentary said China “will cooperate with Washington and stick to its own principles” – aiming to restrain “Pyongyang’s development

of nuclear and ballistic missiles.”

“However, cooperative efforts by China and the US will under no circumstance evolve into any kind of military action against North Korea.”

“Beijing will never support or cooperate with Washington when it comes to implementing solutions that involve using military force against Pyongyang. Nor will Beijing support increasing measures from Washington that involve the direct overthrow of the Pyongyang regime.”

If Trump attacks North Korea,

“the Chinese people will not allow their government to remain passive when the armies of the US and South Korea start a war and try to take down the Pyongyang regime.”

[38 North](#) provides “analysis of events in and around the DPRK.” It’s a Johns Hopkins University Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies US-Korea Institute program – managed by former State Department official Joel Wit and USKI assistant director Jenny Town.

On April 21, it said

“(c)ommercial satellite imagery of the Punggye-ri Nuclear Test Site from April 19 indicates probable trailers near the North Portal, the tunnel that North Korea appears to have been preparing for a nuclear test.”

“While no recent dumping is observed, there are at least five mining carts along the tracks leading to the spoil pile and one probable small equipment trailer adjacent to the support building. A net canopy remains in place, presumably concealing equipment...”

It’s unclear if site activity is a “tactical pause” ahead of another nuclear test. Satellite imagery “indicate(s) that the Punggye-ri nuclear test site appears able to conduct a sixth nuclear test at any time once the order is received from Pyongyang.”

Key is what happens if it occurs. Attacking North Korea would be madness, risking possible nuclear war no one can win.

On April 19, Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said

“(t)he situation (on the Korean peninsula) is fraught with unpredictable tensions, and we are concerned about that.”

“We stand for continuing political and diplomatic efforts aimed at solving the North Korea issue, particularly using international formats that have already proved to be effective.” Sanctions do not, “an unsuccessful approach,” said Peskov.

On Friday, an amended Security Council statement “strongly condemn(ed)” Pyongyang’s

April 15 missile test. It expressed “utmost concern (over its) highly destabilizing behavior and flagrant and provocative defiance of the Security Council.”

It stressed “the importance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in North-East Asia at large.”

It express a commitment by Security Council members to “a peaceful, diplomatic and political solution to the situation.”

It urged efforts “to facilitate a peaceful and comprehensive solution through dialogue.”

The original US draft omitted mention of “dialogue” in the text. Russia insisted it be included.

Its amended version was adopted. Whether it’s enough to prevent conflict on the Korean peninsula remains to be seen. Tensions remain high.

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net.

His new book as editor and contributor is titled “Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III.”

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html>

Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com.

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Stephen Lendman](#), Global Research, 2017

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Stephen Lendman](#)

About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."
<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca