

## South Korea: No Plans to Cancel Exercise on YP Do

The Times of India is reporting that South Korea will not cancel its planned live fire exercise on YP Do. ( <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/rest-of-world/S-Korea-resists-pressure-to-cancel-live-fire-drill/articleshow/7126540.cms> ).

*"We have no plan to cancel our exercise," a South Korean defence ministry spokesman told AFP, adding the one-day drill may take place on Monday or Tuesday.*

*The flare-up, coming in the wake of nuclear-armed North Korea revealing a uranium enrichment programme, has sparked alarm around the world.*

*On Sunday, a South Korean military aircraft was flying over Yeonpyeong, with marines on patrol near their seaside barracks.*

*North Korea Saturday predicted "disaster" if South Korea goes ahead with the artillery exercise.*

***A (North Korean) foreign ministry statement accused US troops -- some 20 of whom who will take part in the drill -- of providing a "human shield" for the event.***

*The North said the exercise "would make it impossible to prevent the situation on the Korean peninsula from exploding and escape its ensuing disaster".*

*It said its military has already threatened "decisive and merciless punishment" for such an action and "does not make an empty talk".*

Please read the entire article for more important information.

**Analysis.** Talk about upping the ante. The North Korean statements referenced are from a Dec 17 article on the KCNA web site ( <http://www.kcna.co.jp/index-e.htm>) that was referenced in a previous post. If I didn't know better I would almost say that the somebody was baiting North Korea. Quite frankly, anybody who invites war on the Korean Peninsula is just a tiny bit short of F\*\*\*ing stupid. You keep poking Kim with a "sharp stick" and he will retaliate. He has no choice.

The US has the rotating Presidency of the UN Security Council and has scheduled a meeting for Sunday at 1100 Eastern Standard Time (Z-4). This meeting is at the request of the Russian Federation and the subject will be North Korea. After the Russians' rebuff of North Korea in Moscow this last week, things must have gotten a lot worse for them to have asked for the Security Council meeting.

It is highly doubtful that this meeting will accomplish anything unless the PRC is ready to approve a resolution condemning North Korea for the sinking of the Cheonan and the bombardment of YP Do in November. This is becoming a lose-lose situation for the PRC. They may well not like that. But it appears that their choice is to condemn North Korea for any Security Council Resolution to be passed that "directs" South Korea not to conduct its live fire exercise. Otherwise, it is highly likely that the US will veto any resolution that just calls on South Korea not to conduct the live fire exercise.

I'm not exactly sure what Americans are doing on YP Do at this moment unless they are part of a fire direction team augmenting the South Korean anti-artillery system that was a little slow locating the

122mm rocket launchers and North Korea artillery pieces the last time out. I strongly suspect that both the US and South Korea will have forward air controllers airborne during to exercise to direct aircraft attacks on appropriate targets. The South Koreans launched last time. They will be more prepared this time with aircraft already airborne and in the area.

Nor do I discount the ability of North Korea to preempt at any time by causing an incident somewhere else. I also doubt that North Korea will do that. They would much rather be able to claim that their rhetoric forced the South to cancel the live fire exercise. That would gain them a lot of face in the area.

On the South Korea side, we have the statement of President Lee not too long a go talking about a coming reunification event. This may be where the Seoul government has decided to see if it can cause the Kim government to collapse. At the very least, the Lee government will do everything it can to stuff this exercise right in Kim's face.

This is a conflict that has been lying in wait since the Korean War ended in an armistice and not a clear victory. Perhaps its time has finally come.