

**Joint Communiqué:
Thirty-Sixth Annual US-ROK Security Consultative Meeting**

1. The 36th Republic of Korea (ROK)-United States (US) Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) was held in Washington, D.C. on 22 October 2004. U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and ROK Minister of National Defense Yoon Kwang Ung led their respective delegations, which included senior defense and foreign affairs officials. Before the SCM, the Chairmen of the respective Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard B. Myers and General Kim Jong Hwan, presided over the 26th ROK-US Military Committee Meeting (MCM) on 21 October 2004.

2. Secretary Rumsfeld expressed his appreciation for the Republic of Korea's provision of additional forces in Iraq, noting that Korea, as the fourth largest troop contributor, was playing a vital role in assisting the Iraqi people to build a free and secure society. He promised that the US would continue to work closely with the ROK, particularly on intelligence sharing, to ensure the smooth accomplishment of the ROK forces' mission in Iraq. The Secretary praised the performance of the ROK forces in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The Secretary and the Minister agreed on the need to increase cooperation in combating global terrorism, and shared the view that such cooperation will further strengthen the ROK-US Alliance.

3. Minister Yoon and Secretary Rumsfeld expressed the strong belief that the ROK-US Alliance remains vital to the interests of the two nations and noted with satisfaction the successful efforts to build a comprehensive and dynamic alliance relationship. The Secretary and the Minister reaffirmed that the armistice and the United Nations Command remain crucial instruments in maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia.

4. Secretary Rumsfeld and Minister Yoon expressed satisfaction with the results of the Future of the ROK-US Alliance Policy Initiative (FOTA) over the previous 18 months. Both agreed that initiatives to enhance combined capabilities, transfer military missions, and realign US forces based in Korea, once fully implemented, will significantly strengthen the alliance while adapting it to changes in the global security environment. Noting those changes, the Secretary and the Minister once again affirmed the continuing importance of the strategic flexibility of US forces in the ROK.

5. The Minister and the Secretary agreed on the importance of adapting the alliance to changes in the global security environment. Secretary Rumsfeld reiterated the US commitment to an \$11 Billion program of enhancements directly contributing to the defense of the ROK. Minister Yoon expressed the ROK commitment to coordinate the ROK "Cooperative Self-reliant Defense Plan" with US transformation efforts, ensuring enhanced combined operational capabilities for the ROK-US Combined Forces Command.

6. The Secretary and the Minister emphasized the importance of maintaining readiness while implementing mission transfers and realigning U.S. forces in the Republic. They reviewed the status of the transfer of ten mission areas to ROK forces, and reiterated their commitment to ensuring that the successful transfer of missions increases the readiness of the combined force.

7. Secretary Rumsfeld and Minister Yoon reviewed agreements to relocate Yongsan Garrison and realign other USFK bases. The Secretary noted that the implementation of the agreement on the relocation of U.S. forces from the Seoul metropolitan area fulfills not only the pledges made by President Bush and President Roh in 2003, but also a promise made to the Korean people a decade earlier. Minister Yoon expressed his understanding that the consolidation of USFK bases outside of Seoul will lead to an increase in the readiness of both USFK and CFC. Both the Secretary and the Minister observed that these relocations were a win-win for the Alliance.

8. The Secretary and the Minister discussed at length plans to redeploy some 12,500 U.S. troops from the peninsula. They highly evaluated the close consultation process through which the decision was reached. The Secretary described how changes in US global defense posture and US efforts to transform its forces were the primary factors for the US redeployment. The Secretary further noted that Korea's investment over the last decade in building a modernized military, as well as the achievements of the FOTA process over the last 18 months, had made this redeployment possible. Finally, the Secretary acknowledged the concerns expressed by some Koreans and offered assurances that the unique security situation of Korea is being taken into full account. The Secretary and the Minister expressed their shared commitment to ensure that the redeployment would not weaken the combined deterrent and defensive capabilities of the Alliance and warned that for anyone to perceive such a weakening would be a mistake.

9. The Secretary and the Minister agreed that North Korea continues to pose a threat to the common interests of the US and ROK. They shared a grave concern that North Korea's nuclear weapons program threatens regional and global security and violates North Korea's commitment to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. They observed that North Korea's continued development of weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles, along with the danger of exporting those weapons and technologies, is a cause of significant concern for the alliance and the international community. They reaffirmed that any North Korean use of weapons of mass destruction would have the gravest consequences.

10. The Secretary and the Minister noted that both the US and ROK are committed to the dismantlement of the North Korean nuclear programs and called on North Korea to cease the testing, development, deployment, and export of weapons of mass destruction, missiles, and related technologies. Affirming the solidarity of the ROK-US alliance, and recalling the provisions of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Safeguards Agreement of the International Atomic Energy, and the Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, they urged North Korea to take the opportunity afforded by the Six-Party talks.

11. The Minister and the Secretary agreed that maintaining strong combined defensive capabilities to deter North Korean threats was vital to maintaining peace and stability in Northeast Asia. Secretary Rumsfeld reaffirmed the US commitment to the security of the ROK and to the continued provision of a nuclear umbrella for the ROK, consistent with the Mutual Defense Treaty. The Secretary and the Minister agreed on the need to continue to maintain a US troop presence on the Korean Peninsula and concurred that the alliance continues to serve to bolster peace and stability in Northeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region as a whole.

12. Once again recognizing the achievements of the FOTA discussions, as well as the successful outcome of the USFK troop redeployment consultations, the Minister and the Secretary reaffirmed their commitment to continued high-level consultation by directing the establishment of the ROK-U.S. Security Policy Initiative. They agreed that this forum will apply the format of the previous consultations to the broader, long-term issues the Alliance faces. The Secretary and the Minister further agreed that in order to maintain momentum, this forum should meet as soon as practical.

13. The two delegations agreed that the 36th SCM and the 26th MCM had further strengthened the ROK-US Alliance and help chart a course for the future security relationship. Secretary Rumsfeld and Minister Yoon agreed to hold the next SCM at a mutually convenient time in 2005 in Seoul.