CONUS No Risk

President Considering Air Strikes in Response to Surprise North Korean Missile Test

North's Nuclear-Capable Missiles Can Strike South Korea Now. Will Reach All U.S. within a Year

Americans Living in South Korea at Risk if North Retaliates

Associated Press

Washington - High-ranking administration officials confirm that the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) briefed President Trump today on military plans for destroying North Korea's nuclear facilities and missiles.

The President ordered the Joint Chiefs to review U.S. military options after North Korea's unannounced test of a long-range, nuclear-capable missile yesterday.

The U.S. air strikes would have a 90% chance of destroying North Korea's nuclear arsenal.

The Hwasong-15 missile, with a range of over 8,000 miles, was not equipped with a military warhead for this test. It landed in a remote area of the Pacific Ocean.

The test comes after a month of escalating tensions between North Korea and the United States over the North's refusal to take verifiable steps to dismantle its nuclear weapons and missile programs.

U.S. intelligence sources confirm that North Korea currently lacks the capability to launch a nuclear warhead on its long-range missiles. However, they agree the new missile will have the capability to strike anywhere in the United States with nuclear weapons within a year.

North Korea's nuclear facilities and missile sites are dispersed, and the mobile missiles are often hidden in caves. The JCS report provided to the president, therefore, describes a large-scale conventional air strike. The attack would target all known missile locations, air defenses, and key military command and control centers.

According to the report, the air strikes would have a 90% chance of destroying North Korea's arsenal of approximately 40 nuclear weapons, leaving a 10% chance that the North would be able to retaliate against South Korea with nuclear missiles.

Although U.S. military planners would make every effort to avoid civilian casualties, many North Korean military targets are located nearby civilian population centers. As a result, the report estimates that approximately 5,000 North Korean civilians would be killed in the first days of the strike, in addition to 10,000 North Korean military fatalities.

Should the attack fail to destroy all the North's nuclear weapons, the report describes the likely results of North Korean nuclear retaliation against three targets in the South – Seoul, the capital city, the main American military base in the South, and the port of Busan. An estimated 275,000 people, mostly civilians, would be killed in the attack, including thousands who would die years later of the long-term effects of radiation. The strikes would also kill roughly 12,000 American servicemen and 1,000 American civilians in South Korea.

North Korean nuclear retaliation against South Korea would kill an estimated 275,000 South Koreans, plus 12,000 American servicemen and 1,000 American civilians living there.

Whether or not the attack is successful in eliminating North Korea's nuclear weapons, however, the Joint Chiefs estimate that the North would retaliate with thousands of conventional missiles and artillery, killing approximately 30,000 South Koreans and 500 Americans.

The Joint Chiefs did not recommend a course of action, but cautioned that military action against North Korea would likely be less effective in the future, as the North continues to increase its nuclear arsenal and modernize its defenses.

	Expected Fatalities
IF US AIR STRIKE IS SUCCESSFUL **• 90% chance •**	**• North Korea: 5,000 civilians & 10,000 military in U.S. strike** **• South Korea: 30,000 South Koreans (plus 500 Americans) from N. Korean conventional retaliation**
IF US AIR STRIKE IS NOT SUCCESSFUL **• 10% chance •**	**• North Korea: 5,000 civilians & 10,000 military in U.S. strike** **• South Korea: 275,000 from N. Korean nuclear retaliation (plus 12,000 Americans troops & 1,000 American civilians living in S. Korea)**

Table Reproduced from JCS Report to the President