

CIA Creates Mission Center to Address Alleged “North Korean Threat”

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It is the first single country-focused mission center established by the U.S. intelligence agency.

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency announced Wednesday the establishment of a Korea Mission Center dedicated to addressing North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile threat, ramping up already rising tensions.

“Creating the Korea Mission Center allows us to more purposefully integrate and direct CIA efforts against the serious threats to the United States and its allies emanating from North Korea,” **CIA Director Mike Pompeo** said in a statement.

The Korea Mission Center is the CIA's 11th mission center, but it's the first to focus on one single country.

“The new Mission Center draws on experienced officers from across the Agency and integrates them in one entity to bring their expertise and creativity to bear against the North Korea target,” the statement said.

Recent tensions between North Korea and the U.S. had accelerated as North Korea conducted a series of ballistic missile tests last month. It also threatened to conduct its sixth nuclear test “at any time.”

“Just as the threats facing our nation are dynamic, so too must the CIA continue to evolve to address them,” CIA spokesman **Jonathan Liu** said, according to AFP.

North Korea last week accused the CIA and South Korea's National Intelligence Service of a plot to assassinate its leader **Kim Jong-un** with a biochemical weapon.

Pyongyang said on Thursday it will bring to justice the “terror suspects” involved in the plot.

“The Central Prosecutor's Office will ask for the handover of those criminals and prosecute them under the relevant laws of the country,” **Han Song Ryol**,

vice foreign minister of North Korea, told foreign diplomats and reporters, according to China's Xinhua news agency.

The CIA and the White House declined to comment, while the South Korean intelligence service said the charge was "groundless," Reuters reported.

It is not known how many people would be arrested and where they were, but North Korea has vowed to "hunt down to the last one of the suspects in every corner of the earth."

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