

U.S.-South Korea War Games: Practice Collapsing North Korean Leadership

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[Civil society groups in South Korea protested](#) the start of the U.S.-South Korean Ulchi-Freedom Guardian (UFG) joint military exercises on August 22. Peace and anti-war organizations gathered in front of the U.S. embassy to demand an end to the joint military exercises, which increase war and military tensions on the Korean Peninsula as well as the Northeast Asia region.

The UFG military exercises will continue until September 2. Over [25,000 U.S. and 50,000 South Korean troops](#) are participating in the military exercises. [Despite denial by the United Nations, U.S. and South Korea on the provocative nature](#) of these war games, the UFG will include the exercise of Operation Plan (OPLAN) 5015, a war plan designed to carry out pre-emptive strikes against North Korean nuclear and missile bases, as well as the “decapitation” of North Korean leadership. The OPLAN 5015, which includes the “4D” strategy (Detect, Disrupt, Destroy, Defend), was first practiced at the Key Resolve and Foal Eagle military exercises earlier this year in March.



Civil society organizations protesting in front of the U.S. embassy included Solidarity for Peace and Reunification of Korea (SPARK) and member organizations of the National Action to Oppose War and Realize Peace. The groups emphasized that the UFG military exercises are not for the defense of peace in the region but rather for pre-emptive attack intended to collapse North Korea’s leadership.

North Korea also denounced the U.S. for threatening peace in the region by conducting such provocative war games on the Korean Peninsula. North Korea’s Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) published a statement by the North Korean foreign minister in response to the UFG military exercises – “The military drill is an unpardonable criminal act of pushing the situation of the Korean peninsula to the brink of a war as the situation there has become unprecedentedly [un]stable due to the U.S. introduction of nuclear [strategic bombers](#), THAAD and other strategic assets into the peninsula and its vicinity.”



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