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## US: Tension hastens Marines' move to Guam

Gaynor D. Daleno | The Guam Daily Post Aug 20, 2017



DEFENSE: Defense Secretary James Mattis views the U.S. Navy's Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine USS Kentucky at Naval Base Kitsap, in Washington state, Aug. 9. U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jette Carr

Secretary of Defense James Mattis on Friday said the United States and Japan will accelerate their agreement to realign U.S. forces in Japan, which includes moving about 5,000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam, in light of heightened tensions over North Korea.

Mattis made the statement during what's called a "two-plus-two" meeting in Washington, D.C. The heads of defense and state departments from both countries sit at this meeting.

"North Korea must stop its dangerous actions as we work to maintain security and denuclearize the Korean Peninsula," Mattis said, according to a transcript from the State Department. "In light of the serious situation we face, we are accelerating implementation of the 2015 Guidelines for the U.S.-

Japan Defense Cooperation and continuing to realign U.S. forces in Japan and Guam.”

“Our militaries are also cooperating in new ways ... this includes our emerging cooperation in such areas as space and counterspace – cyberspace as well as ballistic missile defense and maritime security.”

Japanese Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera said in a joint press briefing with Mattis, “We have the pressing issue of North Korea.”

“North Korea has plans to launch ballistic missiles to the waters close to Guam and it is also advancing on their efforts to launch (intercontinental)-class ballistic missiles, miniaturizing nuclear weapons to warheads,” Onodera said, according to a transcript of the press briefing.

Mattis later said in the press conference, “In the event of a missile launch toward the territory of Japan, Guam, United States (and South) Korea, we would take immediate, specific actions to take it down.”

A member of the press asked the U.S. officials to comment about President Donald Trump’s strategist, Steve Bannon, who has been quoted as having said there was no military solution to stop North Korea from launching an attack.

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson responded, “Well, I don’t really have a comment on what Mr. Bannon’s remarks were in that particular interview.”

Tillerson said he and Mattis are clear that the posture toward North Korea is to use economic and diplomatic pressure on the North Korea regime.

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