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## US Sends 3 Nuclear Stealth Bombers to Pacific

3/10/2016



The United States has deployed three B-2 Spirit nuclear stealth bombers to support U.S. Pacific Command, U.S. Strategic Command announced Wednesday.

The aircraft are the United States' most advanced bomber and part of its nuclear deterrent defenses.

It is not the first time that the United States deployed the B-2 bombers to the Pacific Command. Last fall, the U.S. Air Force deployed three B-2s to Guam. In March 2013, the U.S. sent two B-2s to conduct a flyover near Seoul, South Korea. All three bomber deployments followed North Korean missile tests.

In recent weeks, U.S. and South Korean officials have publicly discussed providing additional strategic defenses for South Korea, including deploying the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile defense system. The officials announced they were discussing its deployment in response to long-range missile launches in early February by North Korea.

Previously, U.S. and South Korean officials had not publicly acknowledged any discussions on the deployment of the THAAD missile defense system due to pressure placed on South Korea by China not to accept the system. U.S. officials now emphasize the deployment of THAAD would be to protect South Korea and the approximately 28,500 U.S. soldiers based there.

On Tuesday, North Korea announced it has developed the capability to put a miniaturized nuclear weapon on a ballistic missile, the same day that the Air Force deployed the B-2s. The Air Force did not specify where the B-2s would be based.

"Recent events demonstrate the continued need to provide consistent and credible air power throughout the Indo-Asia-Pacific region," said Gen. Lori J. Robinson, Pacific Air Forces commander. "Our ability to demonstrate credible combat power while training and inter-operating with our network of like-minded partner nations is vitally important."