

US Deploys Aircraft Carrier Strike Group Off Korean Coast

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Global Research, April 12, 2022

[The Libertarian Institute](#) 11 April 2022

Region: [Asia](#), [USA](#)

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The US has moved the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier strike group near the Korean Peninsula. The ships are expected to enter the East Sea later this week as a show of force in response to recent North Korean missile tests.

The provocative maneuvers were first [reported](#) by South Korean outlet Yonhap news on Monday. Though a US defense official declined to confirm the deployment on record, citing “operational security,” another unnamed official [told](#) Reuters that joint drills are set to take place in the East Sea alongside Japanese forces to “reassure allies and partners in the region.”

The move marks the first time a carrier was sent to the area since 2017, when [three such vessels were deployed](#) amid soaring tensions with Pyongyang following a series of weapon tests.

South Korean president-elect Yoon Suk-yeol recently [requested](#) an increased American military presence near his country, including nuclear bombers and submarines. Following a round of talks in Washington last week, one of Yoon’s top advisers, Park Jin, [said](#) that such deployments are “an important element of reinforcing the extended deterrence, and the issue naturally came up during the discussions.”

There is increasing concern among the US and regional partners that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea will test a nuclear weapon, with the unnamed official telling Reuters an underground test could be carried out “in the coming days.” Pyongyang has not tested the weapon in several years, though it has launched a series of advanced munitions in recent weeks, including an intercontinental ballistic missile.

While Washington is likely to bill the deployment as a way to deter further weapons tests, it could have the opposite effect. North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un has repeatedly

portrayed his country's nuclear program as a check on American aggression, and the presence of a US aircraft carrier, destroyers and other naval power near the DPRK may only reaffirm that stance.

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