



The letter adds: "Ultimately, the timing and scope of bilateral exercises should be dictated by national security interests, not the whims of the Pyongyang regime. And we do not view military exercises as contrary to ongoing diplomatic efforts. By demonstrating the U.S. commitment to a treaty ally and promoting readiness, military exercises with the ROK Armed Forces are complementary to joint efforts to pressure north Korea to reduce or eliminate its nuclear program."

Thus, this bill would ensure that the U.S. military remains on the Korean Peninsula indefinitely to protect U.S. "interests" and because the ROK is a "treaty ally." As for the joint military exercises carried out under the pretext of "self-defence," it is well-known they are aimed at regime change in the DPRK, and that they have escalated tensions in the region. Furthermore, the aim of the U.S. imperialists from 1945 when Korea was divided by force has

been to keep it as a base for "forward military presence in Asia" in the name of "U.S. interests."

Should this bill -- being promoted on the eve of the upcoming DPRK-U.S. summit in Vietnam at the end of February -- be enacted, it would ensure, no matter what improvements are achieved in terms of DPRK-U.S. relations, that the ROK remains in the pocket of U.S. imperialism. This is the opposite of what the Korean people demand and what the times require and must be opposed.

Note

1. The Mutual Defence Treaty between the ROK and the U.S. was signed on October 1, 1953, right after the U.S. was forced to concede defeat in the Korean War and sign the Korean Armistice Agreement (KAA) on July 27, 1953. The U.S.-ROK Mutual Defence Treaty was imposed on the ROK and was a direct violation of the Armistice Agreement which prohibits the U.S. from introducing new military hardware or troops into Korea, to engage in any hostile acts against the DPRK, and requires that a peace treaty be signed to replace the Armistice Agreement as soon as possible. The U.S.-ROK Mutual Defence Treaty has cost the Korean people dearly over the last decades, not just in financial terms but in their aspirations for peace and reunification. This is the main reason behind their demand "U.S. Troops Out of Korea" and for the U.S. to sign a peace treaty with the DPRK.

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