



F-35 Lightning II Program

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U.S. Fifth-Generation Fighters, Strategic Bombers Conduct Show of Force with Allies in Response to North Korea Missile Launch

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Camp H.M. SMITH, Hawaii -- The United States' newest and most advanced fighter, the U.S. Marine Corps' F-35B Lightning II, joined U.S. Air Force B-1B Lancers for the first time in a sequenced bilateral mission with Japan and Republic of Korea air forces in Northeast Asia August 30.

Two B-1Bs from Andersen Air Force Base, Guam; four U.S. Marine F-35Bs from Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan; two Koku Jieitai (Japan Air Self-Defense Force) F-15Js; and four Republic of Korea Air Force (ROKAF) F-15Ks executed this mission to emphasize the combined ironclad commitment to the defense of Allies and the U.S. homeland. Enhancing combined military readiness through integrated missions ensures national leaders of viable and ready military options.

This mission was conducted in direct response to North Korea's intermediate-range ballistic missile launch, which flew directly over northern Japan on August 28 amid rising tension over North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development programs.

"North Korea's actions are a threat to our allies, partners and homeland, and their destabilizing actions will be met accordingly," said Gen. Terrence J. O'Shaughnessy,



In a demonstration of ironclad U.S. commitment to our allies, U.S. Marine Corps' F-35B Lightning II fighters assigned to the Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan are joined by Republic of Korea Air Force F-15K fighters during a 10-hour mission from Andersen Air Force Base, into Japanese airspace and over the Korean Peninsula, August 30th. This mission was conducted in direct response to North Korea's intermediate-range ballistic missile launch, which flew directly over northern Japan on August 28 amid rising tension over North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development programs. (Photo by Republic of Korea Air Force)

Commander, U.S. Pacific Air Forces, who just returned from an unscheduled visit to Japan to meet with his counterparts. "This complex mission clearly demonstrates our solidarity with our allies and underscores the broadening cooperation to defend against this common regional threat. Our forward-deployed force will be the first to the fight, ready to deliver a lethal response at a moment's notice if our nation calls."

Over the course of the 10-hour mission, the F-35Bs, B-1B bombers and Koku Jieitai fighters flew together over waters near Kyushu, Japan. The U.S. and ROKAF aircraft then flew across the Korean Peninsula and practiced attack capabilities by releasing live weapons at the Pilsung Range training area before returning to their respective home stations.

"The F-35 embodies our commitment to our allies and contributes to the overall security and stability of the Indo-Asia Pacific region," said Lt. Gen. David H. Berger, commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific. "By



Weapons dropped from U.S. Marine Corps' F-35B Lightning II practicing attack capabilities impact the Pilsung Range, Republic of Korea, August 30th. The F-35Bs, assigned to Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, conducted a sequenced bilateral mission with South Korean F-15K and Koku Jieitai (Japan Air Self-Defense Force) F-2 fighters. This mission is in direct response to North Korea's intermediate range ballistic missile launch and emphasizes the combined ironclad commitment to regional allies and partners. (Photo by Republic of Korea Air Force)

forward-basing the F-35, the most advanced aircraft in the world, here in the Pacific, we are enabling the Marine Corps to respond quickly during a crisis in support of Japan, the Republic of Korea, and all our regional partners."



U.S. Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II stealth fighters assigned to the Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan fly alongside 2 U.S. Air Force B-1B Lancers assigned to the 37th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron, deployed from Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota, over waters near Kyushu, Japan, August 30th. The F-35Bs and B-1Bs made contact with 2 Koku Jieitai (Japan Air Self-Defense Force) F-15J fighters in Japanese airspace in direct response to North Korea's intermediate range ballistic missile launch, which flew directly over northern Japan on August 28 amid rising tension over North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile development programs. (Photo by Japan Air Self-Defense Force)

U.S. Pacific Command maintains strategic bomber and fighter capabilities in the Indo-Asia-Pacific theater, retaining the ability to respond to any regional threat at a moment's notice.