

North Korea Tests President Trump's 'Diplomatic Patience' One More Time

Over the weekend, the North Korean regime once again tested American resolve and President Donald Trump's "diplomatic patience" by test-firing a new type of ballistic missile capable of reaching U.S. military installations hundreds of miles away.

The state-run Korean Central News Agency released the following statement:

A test-fire of new ground-to-ground medium long-range strategic ballistic rocket Hwasong-12 was successfully carried out on Sunday by scientists and technicians in the field of rocket research, who are bravely advancing toward a new goal to be proud of in the world, true to the far-sighted idea of Kim Jong Un, chairman of the Workers' Party of Korea, chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK and supreme commander of the Korean People's Army, for building a nuclear power.

Kim Jong Un guided the test-fire on the spot.

Looking at Hwasong-12, he expressed his satisfaction over the possession of another "Juche weapon," a perfect weapon system congruous with the military strategic and tactical idea of the WPK and the demand of the present times.

The test-fire was conducted at the highest angle in consideration of the security of neighboring countries. The test-fire aimed at verifying the tactical and technological specifications of the newly-developed ballistic rocket capable of carrying a large-size heavy nuclear warhead.

According to the order of Kim Jong Un, the new rocket Hwasong-12 was launched at 04:58 on Sunday.

The rocket accurately hit the targeted open waters 787km (489 miles) after flying to the maximum altitude of 2, (1,312 miles) along its planned flight orbit.

The test-fire proved to the full all the technical specifications of the rocket, which was newly designed in a Korean-style by defense scientists and technicians, like guidance and stabilization systems, structural system and pressurizations, inspection and launching systems and reconfirmed the reliability of new rocket engine under the practical flight circumstances.

It also verified the homing feature of the warhead under the worst re-entry situation and accurate performance of detonation system.

The Hwasong-12 designation is a first for a missile test conducted by North Korea. The missile tested, however, is believed to have been a KN-17—a variant of the single stage Soviet-era “Scud” missile—which has been test, unsuccessfully, three times in the past.

The missile likely reached its maximum range when it splashed down in the northern Sea of Japan south of Russia’s sovereign waters. Japanese and American military sources confirmed the accuracy of the KCNA report regarding the altitude and range of the missile test, which suggests the North Koreans have made another dangerous advancement in their ability to deliver a nuclear weapon against the U.S.

The KN-17 is believed to be an anti-ship missile that would be difficult to detect and destroy because of its steep re-entry angle. The White House did not have anything nice to say about the test in its official statement, which declared the Hermit Kingdom a “flagrant menace” and called for “far stronger sanctions.”

The timing of the launch was odd because it almost immediately followed an offer from Choe Son Hui, director general of the North Korean foreign ministry's North America office, that suggested Kim Jong-un was willing to sit down with President Trump, if certain conditions were met. It wasn't clear what those conditions were, but U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Amb. Nikki Haley said the launch all but scuttled that opportunity.

"There are no excuses that justify N. Korea's actions," she wrote on Twitter. "This was close to home for Russia. China cant [sic] expect dialogue. This threat is real."