

## US-Provoked Escalation Between Two Koreas Ruse to 'Justify American Military Presence' on Peninsula

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*In the latest escalation of tensions on the Korean Peninsula, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) placed artillery units along the border on high alert after accusing South Korea of launching drones over Pyongyang to disseminate anti-North leaflets, calling it a military provocation and violation of its sovereignty.*

The latest exchange of bellicose rhetoric between Pyongyang and Seoul is the result of “another US-backed provocation geared to escalate tensions on the Korean Peninsula,” geopolitical analyst and former US Marine Brian Berletic told Sputnik.

*It is also a ruse to maintain “a justification for the long-standing US military presence on the peninsula not only to continuously threaten peace there, but to also allow the US military to continue threatening nearby China,” he said.*

North Korea put its army “on standby to open fire” after South Korean drones flew over its capital, prompting South Korea's **National Security Director Shin Won-sik** to warn it would be “suicidal” for North Korea to “[start a war](#).”

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The General Staff of the DPRK has ordered artillery units along the border onto high alert

The DPRK's Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated on Friday that South Korea had launched drones over Pyongyang on three occasions to disseminate leaflets since last week, calling it a...

— Sputnik (@SputnikInt) [October 13, 2024](#)

“The drones allegedly dropping propaganda over the capital of North Korea is a continuation of a US State Department-funded project called “thumb drives for freedom” conducted by New York-based Human Rights Foundation. Earlier this year, the US State Department itself voiced support for efforts to physically spread propaganda using balloons over North Korean

territory. The use of drones which have longer ranges and can deliver propaganda more accurately would be the next logical step in this US government-backed campaign of subversion,” said Berletic.

The soaring tensions demonstrate “how the US is driving some of the most dangerous tensions and potential conflicts on Earth – not only in Ukraine and across the Middle East, but in East Asia as well, including on the Korean Peninsula,” he argued.

The analyst recalled Washington’s hysterical reaction to the “benign Chinese weather balloon” that flew over the continental US in February 2023, when jet fighters were scrambled to shoot it down and confrontational rhetoric was aimed at Beijing “to justify a more aggressive policy toward China.”

“With this in mind, North Korea’s reaction seems to fit into the ‘norms’ the US itself has established, Berletic stressed.

Pyongyang, despite its rhetoric, deserves praise for displaying “infinite restraint in response to serial US provocations including US state-sponsored sedition aimed at destabilizing and overthrowing the North Korean government,” the analyst said.

“It is likely that North Korea will maintain this pattern of protesting loudly while demonstrating military restraint, and hopefully enhancing security to deal with the ongoing violation of its air space encouraged by Washington,” said Berletic.

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