

How the U.S. could denuclearize North Korea by force

The U.S. has the tools to destroy North Korea's nuclear programme in a single, massive surprise strike, but the lack of precise intelligence means the military option is fraught with danger

Kim Jong-un says North Korea is close to test-launching an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)

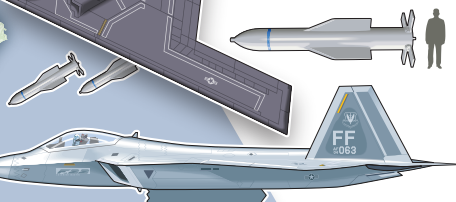


North Korea

MISSION PROFILE*

Aircraft: Fleet of at least five **B-2** bombers could dismantle known nuclear production infrastructure and storage sites

B-2 Spirit: Equipped with either 16 900kg **GBU-31 JDAMs** or two 13,600kg **GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrators** capable of reaching deep underground bunkers



F-22: Can deliver two 450kg **GBU-32 JDAM** bombs

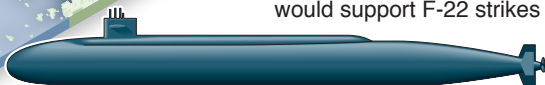
First wave of B-2s would enable fleet of around 24 **F-22** fighter jets to focus on destroying some 200 transporter erector launchers (TELs)

Naval forces:

Around 600

BGM-109 Tomahawk

cruise missiles launched from **Ohio class submarines** and warships from 7th Fleet would support F-22 strikes



POSSIBLE RETALIATION

Rocket artillery: Biggest cost of North Korean artillery barrage in response to any attack would be at least partial destruction of Seoul

Ballistic missiles: P'yongyang's existing stockpile could easily deliver around 1 kiloton (1,000 metric tons) of high explosives beyond Korean Peninsula

Nuclear strike: North Korea may have two to five nuclear warheads which could be fitted to **Nodong** missile. **Single nuclear strike** on South Korean city would cause catastrophic shock

TARGETS

Nuclear facilities

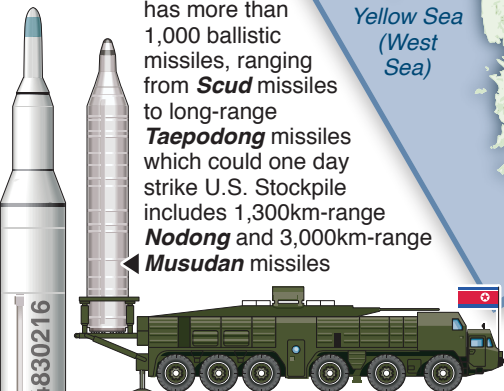
- Reactor
- Research
- Nuclear reprocessing
- Uranium enrichment
- Uranium mine
- Uranium mill
- Weapon testing
- Rocket launch site

Warheads

North Korea has estimated stockpile of 10-25 nuclear devices and is seeking to miniaturize them to fit into ballistic missiles

Delivery vehicles

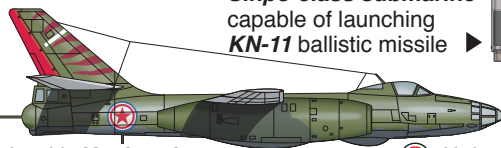
P'yongyang has more than 1,000 ballistic missiles, ranging from **Scud** missiles to long-range **Taepodong** missiles which could one day strike U.S. Stockpile includes 1,300km-range **Nodong** and 3,000km-range **Musudan** missiles



U.S. views so far untested **Hwasong-13 (KN-08)** road-mobile intercontinental ballistic missile as operational

Range 5,500-6,000km

Sinpo-class submarine capable of launching **KN-11** ballistic missile



Air bases for **H-5 bombers**

North Korea fields over 800 ageing combat aircraft, with **H-5 bomber** best suited to be modified to drop nuclear bomb

*Based on analysis by U.S. geopolitical intelligence company Stratfor Sources: Stratfor, IISS

Picture: Associated Press © GRAPHIC NEWS