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## North Korea has more secret nuclear sites - UN report



US nuclear expert Siegfried Hecker visited the Yongbyon atomic complex in November

UN experts believe North Korea has at least one hidden nuclear site, according to leaks of a UN report.

The report relies on evidence from US scientist Siegfried Hecker who visited a secret site in November last year.

He told the UN's panel of experts that the centrifuges he saw probably came from other hidden facilities, say reports quoting unnamed diplomats.

The panel's report, which has not yet been published, was handed to the Security Council last week.

North Korean officials showed Mr Hecker, from Stanford University, an apparently fully functional uranium enrichment plant at the Yongbyon complex in November.

The UN's panel of experts, which assesses the sanctions regime against Pyongyang, was asked to produce the report after Mr Hecker briefed the Security Council on his visit.

Diplomats [told Bloomberg](#) that their report concluded that centrifuges and other equipment at the Yongbyon reactor had previously operated at one or more secret locations.

Another diplomat told Reuters: "There's no way they could have outfitted the centrifuge facility between 2009 and now without there being additional secret sites."

According to the diplomats - who were not identified because the report has not yet been published - Mr Hecker told the panel it was unlikely that the North could have manufactured all of the equipment.

He said it was more likely that they had imported some materials and assembled them in at least one secret location, before moving them to Yongbyon.

The panel's report recommends tightening sanctions to include asset freezes and travel bans on

nuclear officials, according to leaks from diplomats.

The report is expected to be made public later in the week.

Last December, US officials also expressed concern that the North could have more secret facilities, after a briefing by Mr Hecker.

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## US attacks North Korea 'sacred war' threats



The South has held one of the biggest military drills in its history this week

The US has denounced North Korea for threatening a "sacred war" against the South, whose military has been holding live-fire drills near the border.

The state department's Philip Crowley told the BBC there was no justification for Pyongyang's "belligerent words".

In a day of rising tension, Seoul and Pyongyang traded strong rhetoric, with the South warning of a "powerful response" to any attack from the North.

A month ago, the North fired on a Southern island, killing four people.

Thursday's speech by Armed Forces Minister Kim Yong-chun marks the strongest statement from Pyongyang since the attack on Yeonpyeong island.

Analysts believe the hard-line stance might be timed to coincide with the 19th anniversary of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il taking control of the armed forces, which will be marked on Friday.

'Nuclear' threat

"We've heard this language before," said Mr Crowley in an interview with BBC's Newshour.

"Unfortunately sometimes that kind of language is followed by irresponsible actions, whether it's a missile test, a nuclear test or the shelling of South Korea, as occurred last month."

He added that the North would get no reward for its "provocative actions".

China, the North's only major ally, also issued a statement asking both parties on the peninsula to remain calm.

Pyongyang is frequently accused of sabre-rattling in order to strengthen its hand in negotiations with other countries over its nuclear ambitions.

But the North insists that it is the victim, and repeatedly accuses the South of preparing for war by holding military drills on the border.

Kim Yong-chun, quoted by state news agency KCNA, said the North was "getting fully prepared to launch a sacred war of justice", and also threatened to use a "nuclear deterrent".

Despite possessing enough plutonium to create a bomb, the North is not thought to have succeeded in building a nuclear weapon.

International talks over Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions halted in April 2009, when the North walked out and expelled UN nuclear inspectors.

The US has refused to resume the talks until North Korea recommits to its past promises to give up its nuclear-weapons programme.

## **North Korea threatens nuclear 'holy war'**

### **Armed forces minister's comments come South stages massive drills**



Park Ji-ho / AP

South Korean Army K-9 self-propelled guns fire live rounds during military exercises in Pocheon, South Korea, on Thursday.

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breaking news

POCHEON, South Korea — North Korea's minister of armed forces said on Thursday its military was prepared to wage a "holy war" against the South using its nuclear deterrent after what he called Seoul's attempt to initiate conflict.

Minister Kim Yong Chun repeated Pyongyang's charge that the South had been preparing to start a war by conducting live-fire drills off the west coast, speaking at a rally to mark leader Kim Jong Il's rise to the country's top military post 19 years ago.

He was quoted by North Korea's KCNA news agency which regularly threatens the South, but which had up to now been relatively restrained in its criticism of the military drills.

"To counter the enemy's intentional drive to push the situation to the brink of war, our revolutionary forces are making preparations to begin

a holy war at any moment necessary based on nuclear deterrent," KCNA quoted Kim as telling the rally in Pyongyang.

His remarks came shortly after South Korean fighter jets dropped bombs and tanks fired artillery in the South's largest air and ground firing drills of the year.

It was a show of force staged a month after North Korea's deadly shelling of a front-line island.

KCNA had said earlier that the maneuvers were "madcap" and "offensive," describing the South Korean military as "puppet warmongers."

"(South Korea) is trying to hide the provocative nature toward the North of the war exercises," it said.

The South Korean drills, at training grounds in mountainous Pocheon about 20 miles from the Koreas' heavily fortified border, signaled the country's determination to demonstrate and hone its military strength at the risk of further escalation with North Korea.

### **Hills erupt in smoke**

Tanks raced down mountain roads firing artillery rounds. The boom of cannons echoed through the valley and the hills erupted in smoke.

Rockets streamed across the valley and slammed into the side of a hill as helicopters overhead fired rockets at targets and F-15 fighters zoomed by dropping bombs.



Wally Santana / AP

Two F-15K fighter jets drop bombs during military exercises on Thursday in Pocheon, South Korea.

The drills, which lasted about 40 minutes, were the armed forces' largest joint firing exercises this year, and the biggest-ever wintertime air and ground firing exercises, government and army officials said on condition of anonymity, citing department rules.

Forty-seven similar exercises have taken place this year but Thursday's maneuvers were scheduled in response to the North Korean attack, according to army officials.

Exactly one month ago, routine South Korean live-fire drills from Yeonpyeong Island in the Yellow Sea triggered a shower of North Korean artillery that killed two marines and two construction workers.

It was the first military attack on a civilian area since the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a truce.

North Korea, which claims the waters around the South Korean-held

island lying just 7 miles from its shores as its territory, accused the South of sparking the exchange by ignoring Pyongyang's warnings against staging the live-fire drills near their disputed maritime border.

Amid international concerns of all-out war on the tense Korean peninsula, South Korea has pushed ahead with military exercises over the past several weeks, including live-fire drills from Yeonpyeong Island and Thursday's exercises.

"We will thoroughly punish the enemy if it provokes us again as with the shelling of Yeonpyeong Island," Brig. Gen. Ju Eun-sik, chief of the South Korean army's 1st Armored Brigade, said in a statement Wednesday.

The two Koreas remain technically at war because their 1950s conflict ended in a cease-fire, not a peace treaty.

In a rare trip to the front line, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak visited a military unit near the border to inspect defensive readiness against Pyongyang.

"We had believed patience would ensure peace on this land, but that was not the case," Lee told troops.

Lee has replaced his top defense officials with more hawkish military men, a response to criticism of a perceived weak response to hostile acts from the North.

[Slideshow: The life of Kim Jong Il](#) (on this page)

The military tension over the past month has been the worst in more than a decade, and comes on the heels of the March sinking of a South Korean warship that Seoul blames on Pyongyang, but which North Korea denies attacking. Forty-six sailors died in that incident.

South Korea's navy also was conducting annual anti-submarine exercises off the east coast.

In Pocheon, dozens of soldiers and civilians, including schoolchildren

in bright yellow jackets, watched the drills.

"We are facing a crisis because of North Korea, so I came to see this air and ground operation. I want to feel and see the level of South Korea's armed forces," said Kim Tae-dong, 70. "Another North Korean provocation will happen. We should prepare our military perfectly for that."

China, the impoverished North's only major ally, has urged dialogue to resolve the crisis and has been reluctant lay to blame, frustrating Washington and its allies which want Beijing to do more to rein in Pyongyang.

Barack Obama is expected to press this point when [Chinese President Hu Jintao visits the United States on January 19](#) .

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## **US envoy Bill Richardson hopes to calm North Korea**



Mr Richardson has good contacts with senior North Korean officials

Bill Richardson, governor of the US state of New Mexico, is travelling to North Korea on an unofficial diplomatic mission to ease regional tensions.

Mr Richardson, who has been to Pyongyang several times in recent years, said he hoped to persuade the North Koreans to "calm down a bit".

Tensions have been especially high between the two Koreas since the North shelled a South Korean island.

There are also renewed fears that the North has advanced its nuclear work.



The US State Department has said North Korea has "at least one other" uranium enrichment site in addition to the one shown to US experts last month.

And South Korean Foreign Minister Kim Sung-hwan said he believed there were facilities in North Korea aside from the Yongbyon site shown to the US scientists.

Uranium can be enriched to provide fuel for nuclear power reactors, as Pyongyang says it is doing, or it can be enriched more highly to provide material for nuclear weapons.

North Korea has conducted two nuclear tests and is believed to have enough plutonium to make about six bombs.

In a sign of how alarmed South Korean officials are by the renewed tensions with the North, the country has been holding its biggest-ever civil defence drill.

The drill was held in tandem with military live-fire exercises across the country.

Northern frustration?

The US State Department has said Mr Richardson is not delivering a message to the North Korean government for President Barack Obama.

He was invited to Pyongyang by Kim Gye-gwan, North Korea's lead negotiator in the stalled six-party talks on his country's nuclear disarmament talks.

Before leaving the US, Mr Richardson said he would talk to the White House on his return.

"My objective is to try to get North Korea to calm down a bit, see if we can reduce tension in the Korean peninsula," he said.

Analysts say his invitation is a sign of North Korea's frustration at being denied formal negotiations with the US.

Pyongyang and its main ally, China, have been calling for a resumption of the six-party talks.

But South Korea and the US have said the North must stop its "provocative and belligerent" behaviour and take action to roll back its nuclear work.

South Korea was shocked by the shelling of Yeonpyeong island on 23 November. Two soldiers and two civilians were killed in the barrage, which came after South Korea held live fire exercises in the area.

South Korea has reviewed its rules of engagement and promised air strikes in response to any future attacks.

The sinking of a South Korean warship, with the loss of 46 sailors, in March was blamed on North Korea. Pyongyang denies the accusation.

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## **North Korea has at least one other uranium**

## site, US says



US nuclear expert Siegfried Hecker visited the Yongbyon atomic complex in November

North Korea has "at least one other" uranium enrichment site in addition to the one shown to US experts last month, the US State Department has said.

The country's enrichment programme "reflects work being done at at least one other site", a spokesman said.

A New York Times report quoted unnamed intelligence officials, saying North Korea was using "significantly more advanced" nuclear technology than Iran.

Enriched uranium can be used for nuclear fuel or made into weapons.

'Recent revelations'

North Korea revealed what appeared to be a fully operational uranium enrichment plant at its Yongbyon atomic complex to US nuclear expert Siegfried Hecker on 12 November.

Officials in the US and South Korea have said in recent days the facility shown to the expert last month could not have been constructed so quickly if other secret sites or another completed uranium enrichment plant did not already exist in the country.

"We're very conscious of the fact that, in the recent revelations to American delegations, what they saw did not come out of thin air," US state department spokesman Philip Crowley said.

"It certainly reflects work being done at at least one other site."

South Korean Foreign Minister Kim Sung-hwan would not confirm a media report that Pyongyang had three to four plants to enrich uranium. But Mr Sung-hwan said he believed there were facilities in North Korea aside from the Yongbyon site.

"It is a report based on what is still intelligence and let me just say that we have been following this issue for some time," Mr Sung-hwan said on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Governor Bill Richardson of the US state of New Mexico said on Tuesday he hopes to reduce tensions on the Korean peninsula during an upcoming trip to the North - one prompted by an invitation from the North Korean authorities.

The news comes weeks after North Korea shelled Yeonpyeong, a small South Korean island,

following Southern naval drills near a disputed maritime boundary, killing four people.