



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on May 16, 2018

North Koreans, Unhappy Over U.S-South Korean Military Drills, Threaten to Call Off Kim-Trump Talk

In a dispatch issued on May 15, the North Korean state media agency KCNA has cancelled high-level talks with South Korea and — more significantly for the United States — suggested that it is considering cancelling the summit between leaders Kim Jong-un and President Trump planned for June 12. The reason given for these actions is North Korean discontent with the ongoing joint military drills (known as “Max Thunder”) involving South Korea and the United States.



The annual Max Thunder military exercise began on May 11 and is scheduled to last until May 25. This year’s drills involve some 100 U.S. and South Korea airplanes, according to South Korea’s Yonhap news agency.

“We have no choice but to stop the North-South high-level talk scheduled for the 16th under the ugly circumstances where there is indiscreet North-invading war fuss and fight rampage,” the KCNA statement said, adding, “The U.S. must contemplate on the fate of the scheduled Korea-U.S. head meeting with the provocative military situation created with the South Korean government. We will keep sharp eyes on the U.S. and the South Korean government’s future attitude.”

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Despite the strong rhetoric, the United States has not received any official word from North Korea and is still planning for the summit to go ahead, State Department spokesperson Heather Nauert said.

“What we have to go on is what Kim Jong Un has said before, that he understands and appreciates the importance to the United States of having these joint exercises, the Republic of Korea has as well,” Nauert stated, as quoted by ABC News. “We’ve received no formal or even informal notification of anything.”

Nauert defended the exercises as “legal,” “planned well, well in advance,” and “not provocative.”

The *Washington Times* reported that White House Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said on May 16 that the Trump administration is still hopeful that meeting between the president and Kim will still take place. “We’re ready to meet and if it happens, that’s great. And if it doesn’t, we’ll see what happens,” Sanders said on Fox News.

Image: Screenshot of [Air Force Times photo](#)

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