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By Major Rafael Pazos and Captain Miguel Uc

Against the backdrop of current global military operations, the Korean Peninsula is quietly undergoing a significant transformation. To ensure that the alliance between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the United States maintains its long-term viability in Northeast Asia, the commander of United States Forces Korea (USFK) has implemented a transformation framework based on three priorities:

- Defend the ROK
- Strengthen the ROK–U.S. alliance
- Improve the quality of life for those defending the alliance

Two tasks derived from these priorities are to relocate all U.S. forces to two major hubs south of Seoul and extend accompanied tours to three years. These two tasks are monumental, requiring engineers at every level in Korea to develop creative solutions to support the commander's vision.

Relocate U.S. Forces

Two major hubs for relocation of U.S. forces will be developed by transforming existing bases, camps, and garrisons into enduring installations, making Korea an “assignment of choice.”

Southwestern Hub. Osan Air Base and United States Army Garrison (USAG)–Humphreys will be the centerpiece of the future U.S. Army force structure in Korea. This hub already is home to the headquarters of 7th Air Force and will become home to the headquarters for the future Korea Command, Eighth United States Army, and the 2d Infantry Division as U.S. forces realign south of the Han River.

Southeastern Hub. Facilities at Deagu, Chinhae, and Pusan will function as a logistics and storage center.

Two international agreements between the ROK and United States control the relocation of U.S. bases:

Land Partnership Plan (LPP). Signed in 2002, this agreement consolidates and relocates forces not based within the Seoul metropolitan area, namely the 2d Infantry Division. It also provides U.S. forces with dedicated time on Korean training areas and ranges and ensures that safety easements are provided and enforced.

Yongsan Relocation Plan (YRP). Signed in 2004, this agreement relocates U.S. forces and United Nations Command activities out of the Seoul metropolitan area. It also calls for a small U.S. force to remain in Seoul to support the United Nations Military Armistice Commission's rear operations, facilitate communications, and maintain existing partnerships with the ROK government and other governmental and nongovernmental agencies in Seoul.

The execution of the ROK–U.S. agreements is a two-phase process that began in 2002 when U.S. forces were stationed in more than 104 installations with substandard infrastructure.

Phase I: Consolidation. This phase is nearly complete. The United States has consolidated its forces in Korea by closing 37 camps and installations and reducing its force by 8,000 personnel. To demonstrate its commitment and to strengthen the alliance, the United States has returned 35 of the 37 closed camps and installations, totaling more than 12,800 acres, to its ROK allies. In turn, the ROK government has purchased more than 2,700 acres of land to support U.S. relocation directly. The ROK government has begun transferring that land to the United States with an



Part of the massive construction under way at USAG–Humphreys

Extend Accompanied Tours

Traditionally, the majority of U.S. forces in Korea have been there on one-year unaccompanied tours, while accompanied tours lasted two years. Originally, U.S. families would have faced undue hardships during tours of Korea. However, changes in Korea and a desire to give Service members more time to spend with their families have led the move to more accompanied tours of longer length.

Throughout the realignment, units will maintain their full spectrum of operational and support capabilities. Efficiencies will be obtained by minimizing swing spaces (unit moves into temporary

quarters pending final construction) and relocating units into their final facilities at their eventual enduring installations. The end goal will be a winning result for the alliance as it optimizes the use of ROK–U.S. land and enhances U.S. force protection, readiness, quality of life, safety, and ROK–U.S. mutual defense.

Summary

In summary, U.S. priorities remain focused on transforming USFK to meet future security demands and to strengthen and maintain the ROK–U.S. alliance. The transformation and consolidation of U.S. forces is a major signal of continued U.S. military commitment to the ROK and the alliance, providing increased training opportunities and a less intrusive presence. The consolidation of U.S. forces increases readiness, provides efficiencies and cost savings, and enhances the quality of life of our Service members.



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initial grant of 205 acres at USAG–Humphreys, allowing the ROK–U.S. alliance to begin designing, planning, and coordinating more than \$10 billion to construct new infrastructure inside and outside that facility.

Phase II: Relocation. During this phase, nearly 15,000 U.S. Service members will move, and the planned construction program will be executed. The most significant component of the relocation will be the expansion of USAG–Humphreys, located south of Seoul. The installation will be the location of the most intense construction efforts. Outside infrastructure development includes the construction of new roads; a rail extension; and an increase in communication, electricity, natural gas, water, and wastewater capacity in the surrounding communities to support the growth at USAG–Humphreys. Inside infrastructure includes new capacity to support increased facilities and population growth as well as modernizing existing facilities. It will be constructed in conjunction with land development that began in December 2006. So far, 821 acres are under development, with another 1,500 acres still to be developed.

Facility construction has begun and will continue over the next several years. The major facilities to be constructed are the headquarters for Korea Command; Eighth United States Army; 2d Infantry Division; Installation Management Command–Korea; medical facilities, family housing, and schools; communication centers; and the operational and support facilities necessary to relocate the 2d Infantry Division.

Of course, the success of the planned relocation is based on U.S. forces sustaining the readiness to “Fight Tonight,” which is both the motto and the mentality of the armed forces in the ROK. To do this, the United States will prioritize unit movements by balancing the maintenance of unit operational linkages and necessary construction efficiencies. Unit moves will be packaged and conducted in manageable components and placed where their locations would maximize their unit operations.