

# PRESS RELEASE

## House Armed Services Committee Duncan Hunter, Chairman

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **OPENING REMARKS OF CHAIRMAN DUNCAN HUNTER**

*Hearing on U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea*

This afternoon, the committee continues its review of the state of our combatant commands focusing on the U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Forces Korea.

Today, as the world focuses on the Middle East and a possible conflict with Iraq, we cannot forget that the United States faces serious challenges elsewhere in the world. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Far East. The admission by North Korea last October that they secretly continued a nuclear weapons program in the wake of the 1994 Agreed Framework has raised tensions on the peninsula to the highest levels in recent years. These increased tensions have re-opened the discussion as to whether the United States has the force structure and capability to fight and win two nearly simultaneous major theater conflicts.

While this administration's security strategy has evolved from the 2-MTW force sizing mechanism, today we find ourselves facing simultaneous challenges in both Iraq and Korea, a possibility that many military planners considered remote only short while ago.

While North Korea holds our immediate attention, China looms as a long-term concern for the United States in the Pacific. It is clear that China views the United States as a regional and strategic competitor. China has undertaken a military modernization program in order to diversify its options for the use of force in a variety of situations. The most serious of these situations is of course any potential military action China may take against Taiwan.

Admiral Fargo, I am interested in hearing your views on the China security situation. Of more current concern, I am also interested in hearing about your command's role in the Global War on Terrorism and in particular, about our ongoing activities in the Philippines.

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