

Beat: Miscellaneous

NATO's governing body urges North Korea to cancel rocket launch

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USPA News - The governing body of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on Wednesday called on North Korea to call off the launch of a long-range rocket carrying a satellite, adding that such a launch would violate existing UN resolutions and exacerbate tensions. A statement from the North Atlantic Council, which is the most senior political governing body of the military alliance, expressed "grave concern" at North Korea's declared intent to launch a second version of the Kwangmyongsong-3 (Bright Star-3) weather satellite between December 10 and December 22. "Such an act would be in direct violation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874. It would risk exacerbating tensions in the region and further destabilizing the Korean Peninsula," the Council said in its statement, joining large parts of the international community which have also called on North Korea to scrap the launch.

The North Atlantic Council's statement added: "We call on the North Korean authorities to meet their obligations under international law and comply fully with the will of the international community as expressed by the United Nations Security Council and the moratorium on missile launches." According to information released earlier this month by the Korean Committee for Space Technology, the Earth observation satellite will sit on top of a long-range Unha-3 rocket which will launch from the Sohae Satellite Launching Station in Cholsan county of North Pyongan province, which is located in the western region of North Korea near the Yellow Sea. Earlier this year, on April 13, a Taepodong-2 ballistic missile also carrying a Kwangmyongsong-3 weather satellite was launched from the Sohae Satellite Launching Station. The rocket failed about a minute after takeoff, causing debris to land in the Yellow Sea. North Korea said it has since improved the reliability and precision of the satellite and carrier rocket. The international community also condemned the attempted rocket launch in April, calling it a violation of United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolutions and a threat to regional security. North Korea claimed the launch was to mark the 100th birth anniversary of the late North Korean leader Kim Il-sung, but observers said the country likely wanted to use the event to test its missile technology.

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