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## Statement Released by Spokesman of DPRK Foreign Ministry

Pyongyang, November 24 (KCNA) -- A spokesman for the DPRK Foreign Ministry Wednesday issued the following statement:

As already reported by the Supreme Command of the KPA, the revolutionary armed forces of the DPRK on Nov. 23 took a decisive self-defensive measure to cope with the enemy's reckless military provocation of firing shells inside the territorial waters of the DPRK side around Yonphyong Islet in the West Sea of Korea.

The army of the DPRK warned several times that if even a single shell of the enemy is fired inside the territorial waters of the DPRK, it will take a prompt retaliatory strike in connection with the live shell firing drill they planned to stage from Yonphyong Islet while conducting the ill-famed war maneuvers for a war of aggression against the DPRK codenamed Hoguk.

At 8:00 a.m. on Nov. 23, the very day the incident occurred, the head of the delegation of the DPRK side to the inter-Korean military talks sent a telephone message to the head of the delegation of the enemy side once again strongly urging it to cancel the plan for staging the above-said firing drill in the waters around the islet, the sensitive waters.

This notwithstanding, the enemy committed such an extremely reckless military provocation as firing dozens of shells from the islet inside the territorial waters of the DPRK side from around 13:00.

The enemy fired shells from the islet which is so close to the territory of the DPRK that it is within each other's eyeshot despite the fact that there are so many mountains and rivers, sea waters and islets in south Korea. This powder-reeking saber-rattling cannot be construed otherwise than a politically motivated provocation.

The enemy is claiming that they fired shells southward from the islet in a bid not to get on the nerves of the DPRK but Yonphyong Islet is located deep inside the territorial waters of the DPRK away from the maritime military demarcation line. If live shells are fired from the islet, they are bound to drop inside the territorial waters of the DPRK side no matter in which direction they are fired because of such geographical features.

The ulterior aim sought by the enemy is to create the impression that the DPRK side recognized the waters off the islet as their "territorial waters", in case that there was no physical counter-action on the part of the former.

Herein lies the crafty and vicious nature of the enemy's provocation.

The army of the DPRK took such a self-defensive measure as making a prompt powerful strike at the artillery positions from which the enemy fired the shells as it does not make an empty talk.

This incident is one more dangerous development which took place because of the illegal "northern limit line" unilaterally fixed by Clark, UN forces commander, as he pleased on Aug. 30, 1953 after the conclusion of the Korean Armistice Agreement.

The U.S., its followers and some bosses of international bodies should drop such bad habit as thoughtlessly accusing somebody before learning about the truth about the incident.

If they shield south Korea, the criminal, without principle, just for being their ally, this is little short of feeding oil to the fire.

The DPRK that sets store by the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula is now exercising superhuman self-control but the artillery pieces of the army of the DPRK, the defender of justice, remain ready to fire.

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