

Targeting China, US deploys medium-range missile system to the Philippines

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The United States stationed a medium-range missile system in the northern Philippines and has announced that it will be keeping it there, directly targeting China. The Typhon missile launcher system is capable of launching of Tomahawk and SM-6 missiles, and of targeting the entire South China Sea and much of mainland China. Washington deployment of this weaponry to Southeast Asia further destabilizes a region that is already in the grip of war tensions.

The deployment of Typhon system capable of launching medium-range missiles in the Philippines is the first since 2019 when Washington abrogated the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in 1987 by the US and the USSR. The system only became operational in the last year.

In April, the US Army quietly deployed the Typhon intermediate range missile launcher system to the Philippines as part of the Balikatan 24 and Salaknib 24 military exercises. They placed the missile system in the northernmost reaches of Luzon from which it targeted the Bashi and Taiwan straits and the southern coast of China.

When news of the missile system deployment appeared in the press, Washington announced that the Typhon system would only be deployed to the Philippines for the duration of the war game training exercises. The war games ended and the Typhon system remained.

China and Russia both delivered official protests against the geopolitically destabilizing presence of the intermediate range missile system in Southeast Asia. In June, Russian President Vladimir Putin cited the deployment of the Typhon system to the Philippines to justify his announcement that Russia would resume the production of intermediate and shorter range nuclear capable missiles.

A political firestorm erupted in the Philippines. Several Senators delivered speeches claiming that the presence of the missile system made the Philippines a war target for China. The Philippine military reported that the system would be removed from the country by September.

On September 19, a Reuters report revealed that the Typhon system would not be removed but would be kept in

the Philippines for the indefinite future.

The announcement that the missiles were remaining came from the Philippine military; the office of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr has said nothing. Highlighting the subservient and proxy character of the Philippine military, Army spokesperson Col. Louie Dema-ala said on Wednesday that it was “up to the United States Army Pacific (USARPAC) to decide how long the missile system would stay.”

Throughout its history, the Philippine military has repeatedly demonstrated that it is more loyal to the Pentagon than it is to civilian government in Manila. The tensions in the South China Sea are ostensibly all about defending Philippine national sovereignty, but behind this guise of sovereignty the Philippines is being transformed into a launching pad for a US-led war against China.

The Typhon can fire SM-6 and Tomahawk missiles. The number and types of missiles that have been or will be deployed to the Philippines have not been made public. The SM-6, which began production in 2009, has a per unit cost of US\$4.87 million and can serve as both a surface-to-air and high-speed anti-ship weapon. The Tomahawk is primarily designed for land attacks and has the capacity to carry a nuclear warhead.

An SM-6 launched from the Northern Philippines could strike a ship anywhere in the South China Sea or Taiwan Strait. Armed with a Tomahawk, the Typhon missile system is capable of striking targets up to 2,500 kilometers away. A 2,500 kilometer radius drawn from Cagayan in the northern Philippines encompasses the entire South China Sea, all of mainland Southeast Asia, the entire of coast of China as far north as Beijing and as far inland as Chengdu, the entirety of Taiwan, all of South Korea, and the southern half of Japan.

While this is being presented in the press as largely being a measure concerned with deterrence in the South China Sea, the missile system in the northern Philippines will draw the country into any conflict with China, including far from its shores. The US is far more preoccupied with Taiwan than it is the reefs and rocks of the South China Sea. Washington is

setting up a staging point for World War III.

The deployment of the Typhon system to Asia was made possible by the Trump administration's scrapping of the INF Treaty in 2019. The INF Treaty eliminated the use of short and intermediate range land-based nuclear and conventional missiles by both the US and Russia.

Citing alleged violations of the treaty by Russia, the Trump administration in late 2018 announced that the United States would unilaterally withdraw from the treaty. While alleged Russian infractions were the pretext for withdrawal, the actual motive was that the treaty was an impediment to Washington's rapidly escalating preparations for war.

The Trump White House spoke of the fact that the pact was preventing the United States from deploying weapons to target China. That the first deployment of such a missile system since the scrapping of the INF is to the Asia Pacific region, demonstrates that Washington pulled out of the treaty not because of Russian infractions, but because the treaty interfered with US war plans.

The sale of conventional missiles with a range over 300 km is banned by the Missile Technology Control Regime, a political agreement established by the G-7 in 1987, so the Philippines will be "hosting" the missiles, but not acquiring them. In other words, these are US missiles and missile launchers in the Philippines and will remain as such. While all other countries are subject to the ban on the sale of such missiles, Washington spreads a network of medium range missile systems around the globe, fundamentally destabilizing geopolitics, by establishing basing facilities in proxy countries such as the Philippines.

As part of its war plans, Washington is expanding its network of bases in the Philippines, many of which are already in active use. Speaking before a Senate hearings on the 2025 Philippine budget on Tuesday, Philippine Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro revealed that President Marcos had issued instructions to acquire space at the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority for a new naval base. Subic would be one of four new Naval bases built in the Philippines.

The Philippine Navy is already occupying 100 hectares of Subic facilities and plans to expand and construct there. The new naval base should be completed, Teodoro said, no later than the end of 2028.

Subic Naval Base was one of the largest and most militarily significant military bases operated by the United States in the 20th century until its closure in 1991. It was from out of Subic that the United States conducted its naval operations in the Vietnam War, and its presence was a defining aspect of the Cold War, calculated to control and target China. The creation of a new naval base at Subic will, without doubt, be brought under the terms of the Enhanced

Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), the basing deal which allows the deployment of US forces and war material to an ever-growing number of expanded sites throughout the country.

China has repeatedly denounced the deployment of the missile system to the Philippines. In May, China's Ministry of National Defense spokesperson, Wu Qian, said the deployment brought "huge risks of war into the region". Another Defense spokesperson, Zhang Xiaogang, speaking in July, termed it "a strategic offensive weapon reminiscent of the Cold War," that should never have been deployed to the region. On September 19, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Lin Jian, said that the deployment "gravely threatens regional security." China called on the United States, discreetly referred to as the "relevant party," to "quickly pull out the missile system as publicly pledged."

A senior Philippine government official, speaking on conditions of anonymity with *Reuters*, said, "We want to give them [China] sleepless nights." This is the language of war already being waged, of psychological warfare targeting an entire population with the threat of annihilation.

The distance between the Philippine valley of Cagayan where the US has deployed its missile system and Shanghai, the most populous urban area in China, is several hundred miles less than that between Havana and Washington DC. While China has thus far not responded with escalation, Washington's deployment of the Typhon system to the Philippines begins to bear comparison to the Cuban missile crisis.

Washington is actively and rapidly preparing for war with China, while it presses forward in its proxy war against Russia; two fronts in an emerging world war of incalculable devastation. In July, Germany announced that the United States would be stationing Tomahawk missiles in Germany, targeting Russia, in 2025. In early September, the *Japan Times* reported that the United States had expressed an interest in deploying an intermediate range missile system to Japan. Coupled with the deployment to the northern Philippines, Washington is deploying an apparatus to rain death across China and its 1.4 billion people.



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