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## **SOUTH KOREA'S THREE AXIS DEFENSE SYSTEM IS IN TROUBLE**

- 29.03.2023

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The Diplomat (28 March 2023)

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*As deterrence by denial becomes less feasible, South Korea must double down on Korean Massive Punishment and Retaliation.*

South Korea's Three Axis deterrence system is in trouble. North Korea's recent claim to have tested a new undersea nuclear delivery system is the latest in a long series of developments that throw the credibility of this concept into question. The growing diversity, sophistication, and survivability of the North's nuclear arsenal undermines the elements of the Three Axis system that rely on deterrence by denial, including preemptive strike and missile defense capabilities. To respond to these developments, Seoul should focus its efforts on deterrence by punishment, bolstering its retaliatory capabilities in order to dissuade Pyongyang from aggression.

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