# China and North Korea Rapidly Expand Nuclear Arsenals as Global Security Concerns Rise



China has significantly expanded its nuclear arsenal from 410 to 500 warheads within the last year, according to a report published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute on Monday. This increase marks the fastest expansion among major superpowers. WMD expert Hans M. Kristensen noted that China is leading in absolute terms of nuclear buildup. Neighboring North Korea also saw an increase in its nuclear arsenal from 30 to 50 warheads within the same timeframe, representing a 40% increase.

The U.S. Department of Defense has projected that China may possess up to 1,000 nuclear warheads by 2030. This rapid increase comes amidst heightened global security concerns, with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg highlighting that NATO officials have discussed deploying more nuclear weapons in response to growing threats from Russia and China. Moreover, the Pentagon remarked that these developments could outpace those of any other nuclear competitor.

In the United States, National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby said at a White House briefing that the U.S. remains "comfortable" with its current deterrent posture both in Europe and globally. Kirby's comments followed Stoltenberg’s urging for transparency and readiness in NATO's nuclear plans.

Meanwhile, the U.K. is developing a new warhead for its Trident missiles produced in the U.S., assembled in Scotland. However, questions about the reliability of the Trident system persist, especially after a test failure earlier this year. Former U.K. defense chief Grant Shapps defended the missile system's effectiveness despite the incident.

The Federation of American Scientists estimates that Russia holds approximately 4,380 nuclear warheads, with 1,200 awaiting dismantlement. In contrast, the U.S. has about 1,700 deployed warheads from its stockpile of 3,700. These developments are set against the backdrop of heightened tensions, exemplified by recent statements from Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic, who warned of a potential escalation into world war within months.