GW welcomes Republic of Korea distinguished visitors

Story and photo by SN Tatiana Avery, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

BUSAN, Republic of Korea – The crew of nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS *George Washington* (CVN 73) hosted a reception and welcomed aboard dignitaries and distinguished visitors upon the ship's first day in the Republic of Korea (ROK), Sept. 30.

The reception was attended by nearly 300 honored guests including Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Robert Martinage and Vice Adm. Ki Chul Hwang, Commander-in-Chief of the ROK Fleet.

"During my visit to South Korea, I'm reminded that there are very real threats but by being here tonight, I know that we can and will face them together," said Martrinage.

2011 marks the 58th year of the ROK-U.S. relationship. Annually, navies from the two nations conduct more than a dozen maritime exercises together to ensure and improve interoperability.

Joining Martinage on stage to raise a toast to this strong alliance was Commander, Task Force 70, Rear Adm. J.R. Haley and Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Korea, Rear Admiral William McQuilkin.

"We're proud to join some of our closest friends here in the Republic of Korea to ensure that we have a safe peninsula. Four simple words are pertinent and mean so much to us and them and those words are… one team, one fight," said Haley.

The reception included an aircraft elevator ride from the hangar bay to the flight deck where the guests had a chance to get an up close look at the fighter jets and helicopters of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) Five.

Busan, Republic of Korea -- Vice Admiral Ki Chul Hwang, Commander of the Republic of Korea Fleet, address the audience and proposes a toast during a reception held for distinguished visitors and guests aboard nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) Sept. 30.

"The trimming of this port visit and reception couldn't be better," said *George Washington*'s commanding officer, Capt. David A. Lausman. "This weekend, the ROK's will celebrate Armed Forces Day, a time to remember all those who died in the name of freedom here."

Armed forces Day is celebrated yearly on October 1st and marks the day that South Korean forces broke through the 38th parallel in 1950 during the Korean War. More than 36,500 American's died in that conflict.

USS George Washington hosts open house in Busan

From *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) Public Affairs

BUSAN, Republic of Korea – *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) welcomed more than 2,600 visitors during an open house event while in port Busan, Republic of Korea Oct. 1.

The event was part of the Republic of Korea's (ROK) "Armed Forces Day" celebration, a day dedicated to recognizing and honoring the military forces of the Republic of Korea, similar to the holiday of the same name celebrated in the United States. George Washington, along with other U.S. and ROK ships, participated in the event.

Tourists were welcomed into the hangar bay of the Navy's only full-time forward-deployed nuclear-powered aircraft carrier where damage control, medical, and aviation ordnance displays were set up along with a helicopter on static display. Once they completed that portion of the rotation, visitors enjoyed a ride on an aircraft elevator up to the flight deck where aircraft representing all of George Washington's missions were on display including F/A-18 E/F Super Hornets, EA-6B Prowlers, E-2C Hawkeyes and various helicopters.

The event was designed to not only offer an up-close view of military hardware, but more importantly, an opportunity to meet U.S. Navy Sailors one-one-one. Dozens of Sailors from various job backgrounds mingled with guests in order to answers questions or just pose for photos.

"This open house really goes a long way in strengthening the relationship between our countries and our already great alliance," said Lt. j.g. Arnold M. Luminaries, the sales officer aboard *George Washington*.

This was *George Washington*'s second time in Busan, but the first that the ship has ever been open to the public. It was an opportunity not lost on Koreans, both civilian and military.

"For Koreans, it's a rare chance to be on a carrier like this," said Seaman Han Jang, a Sailor in the ROK navy. "It was wonderful seeing everything on the ship."

HM2 Chris Lohman from San Antonio talks to a Korean guest about the capabilities the medical department has onboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington*'s (CVN 73) open house in Busan, Republic of Korea Oct. 1. The open house allowed guests to tour parts of the ship, enhancing the relationship of the two countries.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Cody R. Boyd

Coordinating and setting up an event like this is what symbolizes the main theme between the ROK and U.S. navies, said Jang.

"We always work hard together at sea and it was nice to come here and visit," Jang said.

While *George Washington* Sailors have participated in a variety of service projects throughout their visit to Busan, the open house was another successful way to strengthen the relationship with the community.