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## **SOUTH KOREAN, US FORCES TO HOLD SPRING JOINT MILITARY DRILL NEXT MONTH**

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South Korean and US forces will conduct their annual spring joint military exercises next month, as the allies step up preparations for the transfer of wartime operational control (OPCON) from Washington to Seoul, local media reported on Wednesday.

The 11-day exercise, known as Freedom Shield, will run from March 9 to 19 and include a series of field maneuvers under the Warrior Shield program, Yonhap News reported, citing the South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff and United States Forces Korea joint statement.

Military officials said the drills are designed to improve combined readiness through joint, multi-domain operations on land, sea, air, cyber, and space.

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