



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

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U.S.-ROK Strategic Consultations for Allied Partnership Sub-Ministerial Session

The following is a joint U.S.-Republic of Korea statement:

Under Secretary of State R. Nicholas Burns hosted Republic of Korea (ROK) Deputy Foreign Minister Shim Yoon-joe today at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C. for the second sub-ministerial session of the Strategic Consultations for Allied Partnership (SCAP). Inaugurated in January 2006 by Secretary Rice and then-ROK Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon, the SCAP was created to serve as a bilateral mechanism through which the allies could discuss issues of common concern on global, regional, and bilateral levels. The first sub-ministerial session was held in Seoul in November 2006.

In today's session, Under Secretary Burns and Deputy Foreign Minister Shim agreed on the importance of the ROK-U.S. partnership in addressing global and regional issues. Under Secretary Burns expressed U.S. appreciation for the ROK's deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan and said the United States hoped they could be continued. Under Secretary Burns and Deputy Foreign Minister Shim agreed on the need for the Burmese government to release all political prisoners, refrain from violence against the Burmese population, and begin a constructive dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi. They had a detailed discussion on Iran and agreed that the international community must work together to prevent it from becoming a nuclear weapons state. Under Secretary Burns and Deputy Foreign Minister Shim also discussed Korea's cooperation with NATO.

Under Secretary Burns and Deputy Foreign Minister Shim evaluated positively the results of the inter-Korean summit as well as progress in the Six Party Talks, and noted that they are mutually reinforcing. They agreed to strengthen coordination in order to make continued progress in the Six Party Talks and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. They also discussed the importance of the KORUS Free Trade Agreement and the ROK's participation in the Visa Waiver Program.

Under Secretary Burns and Deputy Foreign Minister Shim noted with satisfaction that the ROK and the United States have been successful in adjusting and strengthening the ROK-U.S. alliance in a manner that meets the changing security environment and future needs.

Under Secretary Burns and Deputy Foreign Minister Shim share the view that today's meeting was successful and that the SCAP mechanism is a valuable asset in strengthening the ROK-U.S. alliance. They agreed to continue their close consultations, and to meet in Spain in November 2007 and in Seoul in early 2008 for the next round of SCAP talks.

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