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Cooperation Between U.S. and Japan on N. Korea Progressing**U.S. Ambassador to Japan Howard Baker's remarks July 15**

The United States and Japan are making progress in their cooperative efforts to control North Korea's nuclear weapons development efforts, says the U.S. Ambassador to Japan Howard H. Baker, Jr..

Speaking to the press in Tokyo July 15, Baker said: "There is good cooperation between Japan and the United States" regarding the "serious issue" of North Korea's nuclear programs.

Baker made his comments after a U.S interagency delegation met with Japan's Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe and Administrative Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Teijiro Furukawa.

Following is a transcript of Baker's remarks:

(begin transcript)

Ambassador Howard H. Baker, Jr.
Accompanied by
East Asia/Pacific Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Donald Keyser
Press Stakeout following meetings with
Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe and
Administrative Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Furukawa

July 15, 2003
Prime Minister's Official Residence
Tokyo, Japan

5:45 p.m. local time

AMBASSADOR BAKER: It's a pleasure to escort a distinguished American delegation to Japan to talk of our mutual desire to control illegal DPRK activities in the world. We've had meaningful conversations with officials of the Japanese government. We're grateful for that. It's further evidence of the cooperation between our two countries in dealing with the issue of illegal activities by the DPRK and by others, and we're pleased to be here.

QUESTION: With whom did you meet today?

AMBASSADOR BAKER: We met with Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe and Mr. Furukawa.

QUESTION: There are two types of reports these days on North Korea. One is the United States has apparently detected Krypton 85, the type of gas emitted producing plutonium. The other one is North Korea has finished producing enough plutonium to make six bombs. Will you confirm both of these?

AMBASSADOR BAKER: No, no, I cannot confirm those. I can confirm that I've read those stories, and that these matters are being examined, as you would imagine, diligently, and inquired into thoroughly, but I have no definitive statement to make, except that we are examining those pieces of information.

QUESTION: So we can expect that report to come out soon?

AMBASSADOR BAKER: Well, I hope so, but we are not yet prepared to confirm those stories.

QUESTION: Who are the members of the delegation? From which department?

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AMBASSADOR BAKER: It's a variety. We have State Department here, we have the Justice Department, who else do we have ... we have these two today.

QUESTION: Did you see any progress about controlling the illegal activities of the DPRK?

AMBASSADOR BAKER: We think there has been good progress, and there is good cooperation between Japan and the United States. This is a very serious issue, and one that concerns both nations very much. I am happy to see that as an outgrowth of the agreement between President Bush and the Prime Minister at the summit meeting in Crawford, Texas, that this is a prompt, ongoing initiative by both countries to address this issue.

QUESTION: Did you see any concrete progress today?

AMBASSADOR BAKER: I will leave that up to others to say, but it was a good meeting today, and there will be another meeting tomorrow.






QUESTION: Tomorrow?

AMBASSADOR BAKER: Tomorrow. Thank you very much.

(end transcript)

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