



Joint Statement
Richard Boucher
Washington, DC
February 19, 2005

U.S.-Japan Joint Statement on North Korea

The following joint statement was agreed upon by the U.S. and Japan on February 19, 2005:

The U.S. Secretary of State and the Japanese Foreign Minister made clear their deep concern over the D.P.R.K. Foreign Ministry Statement dated February 10, 2005, which publicly declared that North Korea would suspend its participation in the Six-Party Talks for an indefinite period and that it had manufactured nuclear weapons.

The Ministers affirmed that North Korea's nuclear program poses a serious challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and represents a direct threat to the peace and stability of the Northeast Asian region, including Japan.

The Ministers, while reconfirming their fundamental policy toward North Korea, reiterated their commitment to continuing to seek a peaceful diplomatic resolution of the nuclear issue through the Six-Party Talks.

The Ministers strongly urged North Korea to return to the Six-Party Talks at an early date without preconditions, and to commit itself to the complete dismantlement of all its nuclear programs, including its uranium enrichment program, under credible international verification.

The Ministers agreed that the statement by the D.P.R.K. only further isolates it from the international community and runs counter to the efforts by the parties concerned to peacefully resolve the nuclear issue through the Six-Party Talks.

The Ministers agreed that North Korea's stated interest in establishing normal relations with its neighbors and the international community can only be met through immediate re-engagement in the Six-Party Talks and the elimination of North Korea's nuclear programs.

The Ministers noted that this path offers for North Korea the best way forward to multilateral security assurances, a better life for its people, and progress toward a new relationship with its neighbors, the region, and the world.

The Ministers expressed their concern over North Korea's missile program and decided to continue to share information with a view to maintaining preparedness for any situation. The Ministers strongly urged North Korea to speedily and completely resolve the abduction issue. The U.S. Secretary of State reaffirmed the United States' full support of Japan's position on the abduction issue.

The Ministers also reaffirmed the continuing strength and vitality of U.S.-Japan security arrangements, and expressed confidence in their capacity to deter and address challenges to regional peace and stability.

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