



Remarks on the Security Council's Consultations on the Nuclear Test by North Korea

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Ambassador Bolton: Let me just say a word about the consultations that we just had in the Security Council. Of course this all comes with the backdrop of a unanimous Security Council Resolution, 1695, this summer, in response to the unprovoked launch of ballistic missiles by North Korea. And in fact, the North Korean test comes after a very strongly worded presidential statement by the Security Council on Friday calling on them precisely not to test.

You'll remember when the Security Council adopted Resolution 1695, the North Korea Ambassador, in the Council chamber, rejected 1695 and got up and walked out. Now, in effect, by testing after the Council called on North Korea not to test, they've defied the Council again.

So I would have to say in the discussion we had this morning, it was really quite remarkable. I laid out the number of elements that the United States was asking for council members to consider in a sanctions resolution that would be under Chapter VII. These elements obviously go beyond 1695 because 1695 was pre-nuclear test. And the entire discussion, in which all 15 council members participated, took only 30 minutes. And that's remarkable in the Security Council, as some of you may know, to have a unanimous condemnation of the North Korean test -- no one defended it; no one even came close to defending it. Most of the members who spoke said they were prepared to work on the basis of the elements of the draft resolution that I had proposed. They agreed immediately to an experts meeting today at 3:00, at which we can consider these elements, and I was very impressed by the unanimity of the council -- admittedly, these are preliminary responses -- but the unanimity of the Council on the need for a strong and swift answer to what everyone agreed amounted to a threat to international peace and security.

So, obviously, we will have some discussions on the elements. We had presented these elements in the capitals of Security Council members at the end of last week or today in order to give capitals the possibility of considering what their position would be. But I was very strongly encouraged by the mood of the council, by the swiftness with which we went through this issue, and by the strength of the feelings expressed.

Now we'll see how the negotiations go, but I think we're off to an important start here so that the message to North Korea, and more important even than the message, the strong steps we feel the Council should take, can be swiftly adopted.

Reporter: Ambassador, last week you said that North Korea's friends on the council were going to have to make a decision on how to react if they did test. They have. Presumably, you were talking about China and Russia, though I won't speak for you...

Ambassador Bolton: Thank you.

Reporter: ...can you give us some indication whether -- you know, what is it that the Russians and the Chinese said that made you think that they might be able to consider Chapter VII? They were quite cautious out here. Ambassador Churkin said only that the North Koreans would face a serious attitude. Not sure what that means. The Chinese pressed for prudent action. So it doesn't sound like very tough language.

Ambassador Bolton: I didn't see any protectors of North Korea in that room this morning.

Any other questions, then? Okay. See you later.

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