



Remarks With Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon

Secretary Condoleezza Rice

Seoul, Republic of Korea
October 19, 2006

FOREIGN MINISTER BAN: *(In Korean.)*

SECRETARY RICE: I want to begin by congratulating Minister Ban on his election as the incoming Secretary General. And when you take office you can be assured of the cooperation of the United States. We look forward to welcoming you to New York very soon.

FOREIGN MINISTER BAN: Thank you very much.

SECRETARY RICE: We have just concluded very fruitful discussions first with Minister Ban. And then I want to thank President Roh for spending a good deal of time with me discussing the situation that we face here on the Korean peninsula.



I came to first of all confirm, affirm the U.S. commitment to South Korea through our defense agreements and defense cooperation. The alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea is one of the firm pillars of stability and security for the Korean peninsula and for the region as a whole and I wanted to make certain that in the changed circumstances given the North Korean nuclear test that it was very clear that the United States takes its obligations under our defense arrangements very seriously and will act on those obligations.

Secondly, it was important for us to discuss the meaning of Resolution 1718, we had an opportunity to review some of the elements of Resolution 1718. The South Korean Government is still reviewing its policies in light of Resolution 1718. Of course, that is work that only the South Korean Government can do. But we did have an opportunity, for instance, to discuss the need to prevent North Korea from trafficking in the nuclear weapons or nuclear weapons materials, and I had an opportunity to express our desire to continue consultations on how that obligation might be carried out.

As I said to the Minister, some of the early reports about what was intended in terms of the inspection of cargo have been a little exaggerated. I said to Minister Ban that some people seem to be imagining quarantine or a blockade. That is not the intention of the resolution. But it is the intention of the resolution to have all states act on their obligation to prevent this trafficking, and I think that there is much that we can do cooperatively in order to do so.

The United States and others are united in the Proliferation Security Initiative, for instance, which has been operating in that way on basic authorities that already stand for countries and on international law. And I know that South Korea is actively reviewing further participation in PSI. Again, we look forward to consultations with South Korea as it makes its decisions.

Finally, I wanted to be very clear that the United States agrees that in fact the purpose of Resolution 1718 ultimately is to contribute to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. And that means that the best outcome is for North Korea to accept its obligations and to return unconditionally to the six-party talks and to rapidly implement the agreement of September 19 which would lead to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, the dismantlement of the North Korean programs, and a better future for North Korea and its people in the international system.

So all in all it was a very fruitful and useful discussion. I think that the alliance could not be stronger. And our resolve to maintain peace and stability even in light of the North Korean nuclear test is a shared one.

Thank you very much.

QUESTION: *(In Korean)*

FOREIGN MINISTER BAN: *(In Korean.)*

SECRETARY RICE: Let me just start by saying that I did not come to South Korea nor did I -- will I go anyplace else to try and dictate to governments what they ought to do in response to Resolution 1718. What I do think is very important is that everyone takes stock of the leverage that we have to get North Korea to return to the six-party talks and to negotiate seriously this dismantlement of its nuclear weapons programs.

I also came to share some ideas, to share discussions about how Resolution 1718 might be implemented. As I said to the Minister, it was passed rather quickly, certainly by UN standards, Resolution 1718. And so consultations, for instance, on how inspection and interdiction might work is extremely important.

I want to emphasize again, the United States has no desire to do anything to escalate this situation. And so the idea that somehow we would want 1718 to be implemented in a way that escalates tensions on the Korean peninsula or on the high seas for that matter simply could not be more wrong.

What we want is effective implementation of Resolution 1718 and its measures or its elements that declare an obligation of all states to keep North Korea from trafficking in nuclear weapons, nuclear weapons technologies, financing their programs, receiving support for those programs. We want scrutiny of North Korean cargo that might be involved in such programs. But there are many different ways in which this can be achieved. For instance, we and South Korea have been actively engaged in container security initiatives, port security initiatives which rely on detection of potential radioactive materials. There are many ways to implement this, and I think that we're going to want to use a wide range of ways to do it.

As to the Proliferation Security Initiative, again there is a lot of misunderstanding about what it is. It has been in being for a couple of years now. It has relied on authorities that countries already have to make certain that there is not trade in dangerous weapons or weapons materials. It relies on -- very heavily on intelligence. It isn't just sort of constant random inspection of ships. And it relies on international law. And so it has been in operation for some time. It has been in operation in a way that has been effective but I think has not been confrontational, and it would be our hope that there are many measures that could be taken to implement Resolution 1718 that have the same character.

We are going to have expert discussions about how to implement them. We've had them in Japan. We will have them with other partners including here. But the key is to live up to the obligation that all of us undertook that North Korea should not be able to traffic in these weapons and weapons technologies nor should they be able to receive help, assistance, financing for their nuclear weapons programs. This was one of the most important parts of the response of the international community to the fact that North Korea, in defiance of the international community, set off a weapons test.

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

SECRETARY RICE: You'll have to start again, sorry.

QUESTION: I'll start again. Sorry. China has always offered inducements such as gas or even a glass factory to lure North Korea back to the negotiations. Would you be concerned if China continues to use sweets rather than pressure during this crisis? And do you have news on State Counselor Tang's visit to Pyongyang? And are you optimistic he made a breakthrough?

And for the Foreign Minister, South Korea has long urged the United States to show more flexibility on the North Korean issue. Do you think U.S. policy contributed to Pyongyang's desire to test a nuclear weapon? And do you agree with the comments of Sung Min Sung* that South Korea cannot leave its fate to the United Nations, that South Korea would be the biggest victim of a war? Thank you.

SECRETARY RICE: Glenn, could you repeat just the last line, I didn't understand what you said.

QUESTION: The last line of --

SECRETARY RICE: After the comments of Mr. Sung Min-sum (phonetic) what did you say?

QUESTION: That South Korea cannot leave its fate to the United Nations, that South Korea would be the biggest victim of a war. He had given a speech yesterday.

SECRETARY RICE: On China -- we've not received a readout from State Counselor Tang's visit. I hope it has been successful in saying to North Korea that there is really only one path, which is denuclearization and dismantlement of its programs. That is China's position and has been China's position ever since it's been playing a key role in the six-party talks.

I'm quite confident that the message that China and the entire international community sent to North Korea with a Chapter 7 resolution with sanctions in it is a quite strong message that their behavior is unacceptable. There is, in fact, a document, the September 19th agreement, that has a whole series of potential inducements for North Korea to take the right choice and to go down the path of cooperation with the international system instead of confrontation.

And you might remember, Glenn, that I've said that the strength of the six-party framework rather than, for instance, a bilateral U.S.-North Korean framework is that at the table you have the countries who have both the right set of potential disincentives for North Korea to continue on its road, and the right set of incentives for North Korea to take a different road. Obviously, it is ultimately a combination of the two that will probably lead to the right outcome. But right now, with North Korea having tested a nuclear weapon in defiance of the international system, the focus obviously has been on the implementation of the 15-0 Resolution 1718, which is a Chapter 7 resolution with real obligations and real teeth, and that's where the emphasis has been.

That said, we want to leave open the path of negotiation. We don't want the crisis to escalate. And the sooner that North Korea would choose to unconditionally come back to the table and take up the very good statement or very good agreement that is their framework agreement that is there as of September, it would be to the betterment of everyone. We do need to have real progress, though, in implementing that agreement not just talking about it.

FOREIGN MINISTER BAN: *(In Korean.)*

SECRETARY RICE: Thank you.

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