



Remarks on Six-Party Talks

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL: We just had additional meetings today. This is all part of a framework of having consultations with all our partners in advance of the restarting of the six party talks. We have made very clear over the course of the last couple of weeks, that we don't want to go to Six-Party Talks without them being well prepared.

What we did today especially was to share some ideas with the DPRK, ideas that we had already worked out together with the Chinese, together with the Russians, the ROK, and the Japanese in Hanoi, when we had discussions in Hanoi. You'll recall the DPRK was not represented in Hanoi. And so we took these ideas and presented them to the DPRK. They have taken them and they are going to study them. They'll go back to Pyongyang and we hope to hear from them soon on how they see these possibilities for the way to proceed.

We've made very clear that our goal is complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. There is no other outcome than complete denuclearization. That is a big task. It involves the complete implementation of the September agreement. When we get going on that, we want to get going on it very fast. So that's what we're going to be doing when we get going in the next round.

If you'll excuse me, I'm going to go get some dinner and you should do the same.

QUESTION: Is it still possible to have Six-Party Talks this year?

ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL: I think so. We want to get going in December. We think it is important to get going as soon as possible. We agreed on that with the Chinese and in fact with the DPRK as well. We'll see what day, but more important than the date is what we do when we do meet. I know that you all, especially, will be very concerned to see that these meetings actually yield real progress.

The purpose of the Six-Party Talks is not to talk; it is to reach agreement to move ahead on the implementation of the September plan. We worked very, very hard to achieve that September plan. All the delegations, all six delegations, worked very hard. We want to get on with implementing it. We've lost a year. We've lost a year. In fact, as you know, the DPRK decision to fire off missiles and to test a nuclear device was a very clear setback for the process, so we need to get moving quickly. That's what we're going to try to do.

QUESTION: Are you going to have a follow up meeting with North Korea?

ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL: I'm not planning on any follow up meetings. I had a very good discussion with the ROK delegation that was here in Beijing at the same time. I also talked to the Japanese delegation that was here yesterday. I'm not sure precisely about my return home, but I'll start going home tomorrow and get to Washington and continue our preparations.

QUESTION: So you're heading back to Washington tomorrow?

ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL: I'm going to be heading back to Washington tomorrow. Yes.

QUESTION: [Inaudible] ...Korea?

ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL: I'm not going to go to Korea because I had really good discussions with the Korean delegation that was here in Beijing, but I need to talk to Ken Sasae about whether I can stop in Tokyo briefly in order to see the Japanese because I was not able to see Mr. Sasae after the conversations we had today. We want to be very, very close and very in sync with our Japanese friends and colleagues in the Six-Party process.

We are working very well, I think, with all of our partners. I would say the meetings today really showed the strength of the U.S.-Chinese relationship. So we'll continue to work together.

Thank you very much.

QUESTION: Are you optimistic...

ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL: Don't ask me if I'm optimistic. I'm never pessimistic, I'm never optimistic. I'm just me, and I'll just continue to work as hard as I can. That's all I can promise you.

QUESTION: [Inaudible]

ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL: I think just explained -- if you were listening -- today we shared some ideas, ideas that we had worked out together with the Japanese and the ROK, and the Russians -- in fact, we had some good discussions with them in Hanoi -- and of course, the Chinese. We shared those ideas with the DPRK delegation. They heard them for the first time from us, and so they are going to take them back to Pyongyang and study them. And we hope to hear from them soon.

QUESTION: How are you contacting with North Korea?

ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL: They know where I live, so I'm sure they can get in contact.

I'm going to go have some dumplings; you might consider doing the same thing.

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