



## Comments to Reporters Upon Arrival at Narita Airport

**Christopher Hill, Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs**

Narita Airport  
Tokyo, Japan  
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**QUESTION:** What will you focus on in the meeting with Mr. Sasae?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE HILL:** Well, I just want to brief Mr. Sasae on the second day of meetings that we had in Beijing with the DPRK. As you know, Mr. Sasae was in Beijing, and we consulted before and then after the first day of meetings with the DPRK. Mr. Sasae had to return to Tokyo, so on my way back I wanted to stop and tell him what happened on the second day.

**QUESTION:** When will the Six-Party Talks be resumed?

**A/S HILL:** Well, we're still hopeful that they can be in December, but as you know we're very much focused on what the purpose of the Six-Party Talks is going to be. The purpose is not to talk; the purpose is to achieve denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. So we have some ideas for how we can move very rapidly on that in the first session. These are ideas that we worked out with the Japanese delegation, the South Korean delegation, and of course we worked as well with the Russians and Chinese. This was all done in Hanoi, and then I went up to Beijing and had the opportunity to speak with the North Korean delegation. So we've shared these ideas with the North Koreans. They'll be taking them back now to Pyongyang, and we hope to hear from them very soon.

**QUESTION:** Speaking about the ideas, Korean *Yonhap News Agency* reported that on condition of North Koreans abandon nuclear program, U.S. would (1) normalize relationship with North Korea, (2) give it economic assistance, and (3) in the future lifting UN sanctions, and the U.S. expects North Korea to reply in 10 days. How about that?

**A/S HILL:** That doesn't sound quite right, but maybe *Yonhap* could do the negotiation and then I wouldn't need a job.

**QUESTION:** How much longer does North Korea have to study your . . .

**A/S HILL:** Well, North Korea was clear. They listened very carefully. They asked a lot of questions. They proposed some of their own ideas, but they said they would take it back to Pyongyang. So we'll have to see. It's always difficult to know what they think.

**QUESTION:** Did you propose to North Koreans that Pyongyang freeze its nuclear facilities in Yongbyon and accept IAEA inspections?

**A/S HILL:** Again, I don't want to get into the specific elements of what we discussed. We discussed a lot of elements, but the main issue is that we're not just interested in talking in the Six-Party process. We are interested in getting some results, and we'd like to see some early results, even as early as the first session. We have a lot of work to do, as anyone who is familiar with the September statement realizes -- many, many items in there, many elements in there. So we need to get going on implementing that, and we'd like to start in the first session.

**QUESTION:** What is the biggest discrepancy between the U.S. and North Korea?

**A/S HILL:** First of all, this is not a matter between the U.S. and North Korea. This is a six-party process, and we have worked very closely with all our partners, especially closely, I'd say, with the Japanese delegation. Our President met with your Prime Minister and had some very good discussions. Our Secretary met with your Minister of Foreign Affairs, and I have met, will continue to meet and will meet in a few minutes with Mr. Sasae. So we have, I think, a very close understanding. The essential issue is that the DPRK needs to take meaningful and real and urgent steps to denuclearization. We have made very clear to the DPRK that they can have a future as a country that gets out of this nuclear business, but if they persist in trying to maintain these weapons and developing these nuclear weapons programs, I think they're going to have a very difficult time indeed.

**QUESTION:** Did you set a deadline for North Korea to return to the talks?

**A/S HILL:** We didn't talk about deadlines. Obviously the DPRK -- the North Koreans are prepared to return to the talks, and I think that it will not be a problem to set up a date. The issue is to make sure that when we get to the talks we really have something to discuss. So I'm going to see you all later, because Mr. Sasae is waiting for me, and then I think he wants to get back to work in Tokyo, and I'll need to get on my next flight.

**QUESTION:** Will you be talking to us again after the meeting?

**A/S HILL:** Talking to you again after the meeting? Maybe not. Maybe you should go get some lunch. I think I'll probably just get on the airplane. Ok? See you later.

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