



## Evening Walkthrough on Six-Party Talks

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**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I've just had dinner with my South Korean and Japanese colleagues. Very nice dinner, we talked about the Six-Party Talks. It was a very good occasion to get the three allies together or, as I mentioned, the three baseball-playing countries together. You're wearing a Yankees hat. Can you take that off? I don't like that. [Laughter]

Anyway, I must say it has been a long and difficult day today. We tried out a number of ideas on the DPRK delegation. So far, I must say today was not a day when we registered much progress. We were hoping to make more progress than we made. So we have to see if tomorrow will be a better day.

I am planning to leave here Saturday morning and get back to the States on Saturday. We will have additional discussions tomorrow. I met with the DPRK delegation several times today. I expect to meet with them again tomorrow. I would like to see them engage a little more in what we are talking about. Indeed, I must say that the U.S. delegation and the South Korean delegation, the Chinese delegation, the Japan delegation, and the Russian delegation, all did a lot of work. We've done a lot of work in the last few weeks and we'd like to see the DPRK delegation match that amount of work and show that they're looking at the proposals. So, as anyone who has been involved in the Six-Party Talks over the last couple of years knows, you have up days and down days, and we have to judge them really by the last day. There is no point in getting too pessimistic or optimistic on any given day. But I must say it was a long and kind of difficult day today. I'll answer a couple of questions if you don't knock me over with these microphones.

**QUESTION:** Did the North Koreans talk about anything other than BDA today?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** The North Koreans had a great deal of difficulty talking about anything but BDA. And, you recall the purpose -- BDA being Banco Delta Asia -- the purpose of the talks this week was to talk about denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. That was the agreement, that was the agreement among all six delegations. When we originally talked to the DPRK delegation back at the end of October, they were interested in having another mechanism to discuss, and in their view, resolve, the Banco Delta Asia issue. We told them we could put together this mechanism to discuss and we would put it together with the idea that we want to resolve it but, of course, that would depend on the interactions of the delegations, and also on the legal matters. We had those talks in Beijing yesterday, that is Wednesday, and they began on Tuesday once the DPRK delegation finally arrived in Beijing -- our delegation was here on Sunday -- and it was a good discussion with a lot of exchange of information. But the purpose of being here was to discuss denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Frankly speaking, there is a certain urgency to denuclearization, given the fact that on October 9, the DPRK actually exploded a nuclear device. I mean, the Korean Peninsula is not a big piece of land. If you look at the map of the world, the Korean Peninsula is pretty small. To have a nuclear device exploded on the Korean Peninsula is obviously something that everybody in the world needed to be concerned about. So our purpose was to discuss denuclearization and to move to implement the September 2005 statement. We're not here to talk about BDA. We understand the DPRK delegation has a great interest in BDA. We prefer that they have an even greater interest in denuclearization. We'll see how we do tomorrow.

**QUESTION:** Are there more sanctions coming if there's no progress this week?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I don't want to predict what happens if there's no progress this week, but I do plan to leave on Saturday.

**QUESTION:** What does this say about the six party process if you come here, work for a whole week and can't move the ball forward at all on implementation.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** "Moving the ball forward" is an American football metaphor that would be very difficult for our Korean and Japanese friends to understand. [Laughter] So you might...

**QUESTION:** I guess you would understand that.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Okay, I understand it. Look, the question is what happens to our process if we don't achieve some success this week. First of all, the week is not over. Secondly, we have worked very hard to prepare this week. I personally have been in Beijing five times since the end of October, solely to prepare for the resumption of the Six-Party Talks. I want to give a lot of credit to the Chinese delegation. They have some excellent diplomats. It is really, frankly speaking, an inspiration to deal with some of these young Chinese diplomats who are so engaged in working on a very tough problem. To be very frank, we need the DPRK delegation to match the level of effort. Some delegations move quickly early and some quickly later. Let's see what the DPRK can do tomorrow on the last full day of these negotiations.

**QUESTION:** There were some reports that the U.S. and North Korea met again on the financial issue today at the U.S. Embassy. Do you have anything to say to that?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** No, we did not. Our delegation were, I think, on the ANA flight that connects to the United flight through Narita, so our delegation was not here early in the morning.

**QUESTION:** Did the North Koreans request a meeting late last night?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** They were interested in continuing this, but it was agreed between the two financial delegations that they would meet again in January. I would say the good news is that, with respect to the financial talks, that there is an ongoing process and exchange of information. But I want to emphasize that I am not here to talk about BDA. This is not what I do. This is what the Treasury Department does. I am here to talk about denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. I am here to follow up on the agreement from September 2005 that all of us, all of us agreed, including the DPRK. We need to move quickly. We have had too many months of avoiding between sessions.

**QUESTION:** The North Koreans did not talk about issues other than the financial issues at all?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** They have had strict instructions from their capital that they cannot engage officially on the subject of Six-Party Talks until they have the BDA issue resolved, and I have made very clear I am not a BDA negotiator.

**QUESTION:** Does that mean your talks were focused on the BDA issues?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** No, it was far more complex than that.

**QUESTION:** What will you do tomorrow if they still want to talk about BDA?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** There is a limit because I am not here to negotiate BDA, but I can certainly talk about the ideas for the denuclearization.

**QUESTION:** This document, the paper you were working on?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** There were various ideas and earlier this morning I was expecting that we would have a proposed paper from the Chinese chair, and we did not have that paper today.

**QUESTION:** Are you optimistic that there might be a paper...?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** It's hard to think about being optimistic right now, but I emphasize we are on Thursday. We have another day. I think we did a good exchange of information and I am telling you we made very clear what our concerns are about this process. We need to have denuclearization and with denuclearization a lot of things become possible. Without it, frankly speaking, very little is possible.

**QUESTION:** You talk about this being an urgent problem but do you really sense from the North Koreans that they feel an urgency, that they want to get [inaudible]?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Again, rather than asking what I sense, why don't you ask them what they feel? The six party process, which has been going on for some years, which had 13 months of unexplained hiatus, I think it's important that we try to make some progress early on, and we are ready because we have done a lot of work. We have people on our delegation who have worked day and night on this issue. I just think if we are going to make progress, people need to work. I must say we worked hard, the Chinese delegation worked extremely hard to put together this six party process. To talk to the South Koreans and the Japanese tonight, it's so obvious how engaged everybody is. But it's not going to work if DPRK doesn't get the job done.

**QUESTION:** Are you going to set another date or are you going to agree in principal to new talks if there's nothing...

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I am planning to leave on Saturday morning. We'll see where we are Saturday morning. I will get back to the States and then we'll assess where we are.

**QUESTION:** BDA aside, what is the biggest sticking point?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** It's hard to say, because I think all the parties have put together some pretty useful proposals. I think there are proposals that would be of equal use to the DPRK, so it's hard to say what the sticking point would be.

**QUESTION:** You were saying that things are very tough, but the yesterday you were saying things were warming up. Now it's a very difficult day again.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I tried to make those comments with a lot of caveats to say it's always hard to say how things are going. Certainly, in these talks, you really have to judge them by the end rather than the sort of muddle in the middle. Today I would have liked to see a greater effort to take some specific issues, and nail them down, and say "okay, we agree with these, we will move on to the next." We didn't get that kind of specificity. Again, I don't want to say I am pessimistic, but I certainly don't want to say I am optimistic.

**QUESTION:** Can you give us some details about the proposals?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Again, I'm sorry. I don't want to give you a lot of information on that because these are tough issues involving extremely important questions of nuclear weapons, and I just don't think it's appropriate to negotiate through the press.

**QUESTION:** Can't you at least get a Yongbyon freeze? That would seem to be a...

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Oh, you think that's easy? [Laughter] I'll tell you what -- put that boom microphone down and you get it done and I'll buy you a beer. [Laughter]

**QUESTION:** Are you meeting with the North Koreans tomorrow? What's the schedule tomorrow?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I'm sure I'll meet with the DPRK delegation tomorrow. I met with them several times today. I'm sure I'll meet with them tomorrow. Look, I want to be very clear: we are trying as hard as we can to get this done, but we are not prepared for a situation where somehow we pretend that they are doing things and they pretend to disarm and we pretend to believe them. This has to be real. It's on the ground. It's tough stuff, so we'll see how we do.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Hill, if all they want is BDA, why don't you just resolve it? Then you'll have a deal.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Another person who knows my job better than I do. [Laughter] You know, life is not so simple. It just isn't that simple. What they need to do is show that they are serious about getting rid of nuclear weapons. A lot of these financial issues, frankly speaking, are related to the question of whether they are out there securing financing and securing equipment or technology for these weapons of mass destruction. After all, we're talking about a country that has created weapons of mass destruction, and the issue is not so much what they are going to do, but what we're going to do about that fact. We need to protect ourselves. We need to protect ourselves in a variety of different ways and we need to make sure that the international financial system is not easily available to countries that are involved in nuclear weapons programs.

**QUESTION:** Do you think that the countries will at least be able to agree on a date for the next [inaudible]?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** At least? I tell you, let me become a journalist and then you take my job. We are interested in this process in so far as it can lead to results. We are not interested in the Six-Party Talks in order to talk. We constantly have to assess whether this process can lead to results.

**QUESTION:** Ambassador, you mentioned that they have instructions that they cannot engage in other issues until they resolve the BDA. Is it still useful to meet with them if they have that kind of instructions?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I think they need to engage on the issue that I'm empowered to discuss, which is denuclearization. I'm not here to talk about BDA. I'm really not. It is very important for everyone to remember that on October 9th, they exploded a nuclear device. It seems to me that, having exploded a nuclear device, which is an extremely upsetting moment for Northeast Asia, and especially for the Korean Peninsula, this is not a time to then talk about finances. This is a time to talk

about denuclearization and getting out of that business.

**QUESTION:** Are there any indications that North Korea will get a change in instructions overnight?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I'm not in a position to talk about their instructions. I have instructions. They have instructions. All six parties have instructions. What I'm here to do is to talk about denuclearization. I'm not here to talk about financial problems. But there's one thing that anyone involved in denuclearization can predict: that as long as they stay in this nuclear business, they are going to have more and more and more financial problems.

**QUESTION:** [Inaudible]

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I'm sorry. I had two Japanese journalists at the same time. I'm sorry.

**QUESTION:** What could be considered progress so far in this round?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Again, I want to stress that these rounds, you have to judge them by the end. It's hard to judge a round in the middle, so why don't you ask me when the round is over and I can tell you whether there is any progress.

**QUESTION:** Are you ready to set a date for the next meeting?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I'm not ready to set a date for the next meeting. It kind of depends on how we do at the completion of this round.

**QUESTION:** I mean, North Koreans want to see the BDA resolved. How can they resolve the BDA problem? So they want to set the date after the BDA meeting, I think.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** We have had a couple of BDA discussions here in Beijing and I think the two parties agreed to meet in January. I'm not part of the BDA discussions. I'm here to discuss denuclearization. I'm here to discuss implementation of the September agreement. To the extent the DPRK wants to talk about that, we have a negotiation. If they don't want to talk about that, we don't have a negotiation.

**QUESTION:** Did you sense, unofficially, any wiggle room? You know, you said officially there's one position...

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Again, I want to stress we are not at the end of the round, and I'll be happy to answer that question at the end of this round. Today is Thursday and I'm leaving on Saturday.

**QUESTION:** Is there a closing session then? Has any closing plenary been set or...

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Closing plenary? You're such a formalistic guy. I don't know if we're going to have a closing plenary. Tomorrow's the last full day of these discussions, so let's see how we do.

**QUESTION:** If the BDA is a separate issue, then why have you guys held talks regarding BDA within the six party framework?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** We agreed and we've always agreed that we would have an exchange of information on BDA. We were prepared to do it in the United States, which would have been much more convenient for our delegation because if we had it in New York it would be a one hour flight from Washington. The DPRK asked if we would do it here in Beijing, I think for their own convenience, because they have flights to Beijing. They have many flights to Beijing -- twice a week. So we agreed to send our delegation out here to Beijing and it was a good and useful exchange of information. But I am telling you, I am not here to talk about financial issues. I am here to talk about getting the DPRK out of the business of producing weapons of mass destruction.

**QUESTION:** Do you think the North Koreans are trying to play with your passions?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, what do you think? Do you think they are trying to play with my passions? I don't know. I have no idea. You would probably know that better than I. I'm just here to try to get the September agreement implemented. It's a very simple task and if they're ready, we can get it done.

**QUESTION:** What's the schedule tomorrow? What time are you leaving tomorrow?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I don't know. What time are we leaving? I don't know. I think we'll have some more telephone calls tonight and we'll schedule a time. Just go have breakfast and if you miss the meeting, it's okay. I won't say anything important. [Laughter] Hey, I've really got to get some sleep. You have no idea how much I would like to get some sleep, so you get some sleep too. Good night.

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