

SSPC Fact Sheet

Nuclear North Korea & Six Party Multilateral Negotiation

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FACT SHEET



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The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), otherwise known to the world as North Korea has indicated its willingness to go to the fifth round of the six-party multilateral nuclear talks in Beijing in November 2005 as it had promised. However, the green signal came with a accusation that the United States has been using words and deeds contrary to the joint statement issued in September this year. The United States and North Korea have since disagreed over when to discuss giving the Stalinist Regime a light-water civilian nuclear reactor while Washington administration reiterated that discussions about a reactor deal should only come after inspectors verify Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program.

Historically speaking, North Korea is the United States' longest-standing adversary. After the division of Korean Peninsula at the end of World War II, the two countries have always found themselves at the loggerheads. Relations between the two countries was at the lowest ebb in the early 1990s when North Korea expanded its nuclear program and the US considered bombing North's suspected weapons development facilities.

The nuclear standoff between US and North Korea has many repercussions than one to the world. The severity of this imbroglio has put the whole world in tenterhooks and certainly looks ominous when the US has already brandished North Korea as a part of the 'Axis of Evils' along with Iran and pre-invasion Iraq. All eyes are now set for a positive outcome to come from the ongoing six-party talks involving the US, China, Japan, South Korea, North Korea and Japan. So far four rounds of talks have been taken place. A new round of this multilateral parley on nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula is expected to open before mid-November where participants would discuss issues that include the dismantling of North Korea's nuclear weapons program, economic aid and normalization of diplomatic relations, and the construction of new light-water reactors in North Korea.

A chronology of events along with the latest Joint Statement is presented here:

July 20, 1977: North Korea signed "Type 66" agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The agreement allowed the IAEA to monitor the Soviet-supplied 2MW IRT-research reactor and 0.1MW critical assembly located at Yongbyon.

December 12, 1985: North Korea signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). Under the provisions of the NPT, North Korea had 18 months to negotiate and sign a safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

May 1988: The IAEA conducted inspections of the Soviet-supplied 2MW IRT-research reactor at Yongbyon.

December 1988: The deadline for North Korea to negotiate and sign the IAEA safeguards agreement passed without the agreement being signed.

July 1989: US Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney asked North Korea to place all its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards.

September 1989: US Secretary of State James A. Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze met to discuss suspicions concerning North Korea's nuclear weapons program. During the meeting, Baker expressed concern about North Korea's research reactor.

February 1990: North Korea's representative to the IAEA placed North Korea's conditions for signing the IAEA safeguards agreement. The conditions included: (a) all US nuclear weapons be removed from South Korea, (b) the US-South Korean Team Spirit military exercises be discontinued, and (c) North Korea be allowed to declare the safeguards agreement "null and void, depending on its evaluation of the attitudes" of nuclear weapon states.

April 18, 1990: According to Deputy Director General of the IAEA, Boris Semenov, North Korea will sign the IAEA safeguards agreement by September 1990.

July 21, 1990: North Korea proposed direct talks with the United States as a condition for agreeing to IAEA on-site inspections. It also said that it would sign the IAEA's safeguards agreement if the United States: (1) promises not to launch a nuclear attack against it, and (2) withdraws nuclear weapons from South Korea.

November 24, 1990: Following the US-IAEA-North Korean meeting in China, US Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Richard Solomon received a report which stated that North Korea may sign the IAEA safeguards agreement in order to improve relations with the United States and Japan.

April 12, 1991: South Korean Defense Minister Lee Jong-Ku announced that South Korea will attack North Korea's nuclear facilities at Yongbyon if it does not sign the IAEA safeguards agreement. North Korean President Kim Il-Sung said that the announcement, a "virtual declaration of war."

June 07, 1991: A delegation of senior North Korean diplomats, led by Chon Chung-kuk met with IAEA Director General Hans Blix in Vienna. North Korea said it will sign the IAEA safeguards agreement and allow international inspections to all of its facilities, (including installations at Yongbyon). Officials from both sides were scheduled to meet in July 1991, and the agreement should be ready for approval by September 1991. According to one IAEA representative, North Korea will sign an inspection agreement as soon as technical matters, such as inspections scheduling and procedures were negotiated. North Korea continued to demand that the United States remove its nuclear weapons and troops from South Korea before it will consider international inspections.

December 23, 1991: North Korea announced that it will sign the IAEA safeguards agreement.

December 31, 1991: Both North and South Korea signed Joint Declaration on denuclearization of Korean Peninsula. Through this declaration both the sides pledged not to test, manufacture, produce, receive,

possess, store, deploy, or use nuclear weapons and forbade the possession of nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities. A procedure for inter-Korean inspection was to be organized and a North-South Joint Nuclear Control Commission (JNCC) was mandated with verification of the denuclearization of the peninsula.

January 21, 1992: US-North Korean high-level political meetings commenced at the US Mission to the United Nations in New York. In the meeting North Korea was urged to permit IAEA inspections and to give up its nuclear weapons option. North Korea responded by agreeing to sign the IAEA safeguards agreement.

January 30, 1992: North Korea signed the IAEA safeguards agreement. Its deputy minister for the atomic energy industry Hong Gun-pyo said that his country will abide by the agreement. However, North Korea did not ratify nor implement the agreement. North Korea's director of the foreign ministry Chang Mun-son said that the process of ratification by the legislature could take as long as six months.

March 18, 1992: The United States informed North Korea that it will impose sanctions if North Korea does not allow international inspections of its nuclear facilities. The United States and South Korea believed that North Korea was stalling inspections in order to move its nuclear facilities underground.

April 09, 1992: The North Korean parliament ratified the IAEA safeguards agreement. According to IAEA regulations, North Korea required to allow international inspections of its facilities within 90 days. It also required to list all of its nuclear facilities within 30 days of the last day of the month after it ratifies the safeguards agreement. William Dirks, IAEA Deputy Director General, said that the IAEA will go to the UN Security Council if North Korea failed to list all of its nuclear facilities for inspection.

January 26- February 06 1993: The IAEA team conducted its sixth inspection of North Korea's nuclear

facilities. The purpose of the inspection was to clarify inconsistencies found in plutonium samples that were taken at an earlier date. One of the inconsistencies identified was that between “the composition and quantity of plutonium [North Korea] declared to the IAEA” (obtained from melting fuel rods) and the IAEA’s test results. The second discrepancy was between the isotopic composition of plutonium extracted by the radiochemical laboratory and liquid waste samples. Prior to the inspection, North Korea said that the latter inconsistency occurred when “the solution from the basic experiment of plutonium extraction in 1975 was put together in the waste tank of the radiochemical laboratory.”

February 08, 1993: North Korea publicly stated that it might take “countermeasures of self-defense” if the United States and other countries press for inspections of certain facilities.

February 21, 1993: North Korean Minister of Atomic Energy Choe Hak-kun informed IAEA Director General Hans Blix that North Korea will not allow special inspections of the two sites suspected of storing nuclear waste.

March 12, 1993: North Korea announced to withdraw from the NPT. It cited the treaty’s escape clause on defending supreme national interests. North Korea’s two reasons for withdrawing are: (a) the Team Spirit “nuclear war rehearsal” military exercises, and (b) the IAEA demand for special inspection of two suspect sites.

March 25, 1993: North Korea ignored the deadline for IAEA inspections of two of its undeclared sites. According to North Korea, the sites are military facilities, which are unrelated to its nuclear program. The IAEA said that it will refer the matter to the UN Security Council.

November 01, 1993: The UN General Assembly passed a nine-point resolution urging North Korea to “cooperate immediately with the IAEA in the full implementation of the safeguards agreement.” The

resolution was passed with 140 in favor, North Korea voting against, and nine abstentions.

November 30, 1993: North Korea’s foreign ministry suggested that North Korea will withdraw from the NPT if the United States does not agree to third round of negotiations on the nuclear issue.

June 03, 1994: The IAEA Director General Hans Blix informed the UN Security Council that the Agency was unable to verify whether North Korea has used the plutonium extracted from its 5MW gas-graphite reactor to make nuclear weapons. According to Blix, North Korea has removed the 300 fuel rods of the “core fuel element” and mixed them up without marking their exact location in the reactor, thus making it impossible to determine the past activities of the reactor.

June 13, 1994: North Korea submitted a letter officially relinquishing its IAEA membership.

October 21, 1994: The United States and North Korea signed an accord (Agreed Framework), which specified the actions that both countries will take to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue. Under the terms of the agreement, a US-led international consortium will help North Korea replace its graphite-moderated reactors with two 1,000MW light-water reactors. The international consortium will compensate North Korea for the freeze on its graphite-moderated reactors by supplying 500,000 tons of heavy-fuel oil annually until the new reactors come online. Second, the United States and North Korea will make efforts to normalize their economic and political relations by reducing investment and trade barriers. Third, both countries will strive towards establishing a nuclear-weapons-free-zone on the Korean Peninsula. Finally, North Korea will help strengthen the nonproliferation regime by remaining a member of the NPT. It will also allow the IAEA to implement the safeguards agreement and monitor the freeze on its nuclear facilities.

November 04, 1994: The UN Security Council endorsed the nuclear accord reached between North Korea and the United States in October 1994. It

approves North Korea's voluntary decision to freeze its current nuclear program and comply with its safeguards agreement with the IAEA. North Korea rejects the statement on the ground that it only emphasizes North Korea's responsibilities under the framework agreement.

October 13, 1995: IAEA Director General Hans Blix said in a report to the UN Security Council that North Korea has denied the IAEA inspectors permission to evaluate the plutonium levels in the nuclear spent fuel. Blix added that North Korea has only provided the IAEA with minimal access to its Yongbyon nuclear facilities.

January 23, 1996: An IAEA delegation arrived in Pyongyang to continue talks on North Korea's suspended nuclear operations. Talks concluded on 29 January 1996 and North Korea agreed that the IAEA can conduct routine and *ad hoc* inspections of its operational nuclear sites.

March 18, 1996: IAEA Director General Hans Blix informed the IAEA Board of Governors that North Korea was not cooperating with IAEA efforts to ascertain the quantity of plutonium held at the Yongbyon nuclear facility. IAEA inspectors have made a number of attempts to photograph the facility since September 1995, in accordance with agreements reached with North Korea. However, they have been restricted from taking photographs. North Korea has also been slow in granting visas for IAEA inspectors.

September 17, 1996: North Korea's representative to the UN agencies in Vienna states that North Korea "will not give the IAEA any information whatsoever" about spent fuel from its 5MW gas-graphite reactor "until the new reactors are finished and begin operating."

March 17, 1998: North Korea refused to cooperate with IAEA inspectors, citing delays in the implementation of the 1994 US-North Korean Agreed Framework. IAEA inspectors are prevented from taking samples of nuclear waste. Inspectors are also barred

from taking samples from the high-temperature water plant of the 5MW gas-graphite reactor.

September 1998: North Korea launched a test missile over Japan, claiming it was simply a scientific satellite. This launch alarmed Japan—and much of the rest of the world—about North Korea's intentions regarding reentry into the nuclear arms race.

October 16, 2002: Washington said on 16 October 2002 that North Korea had admitted to secretly developing uranium enrichment technology for nuclear weapons, in violation of the 1994 agreement with the US.

December 21, 2002: North Korea defied world opinion on 21 December 2002 by removing United Nations seals and cameras at a nuclear power plant suspected of making weapons-grade plutonium. North Korea tampered with surveillance devices the UN nuclear watchdog installed at the Yongbyong complex. The agency said the North cut most of the seals on equipment and tampered with cameras at the five-megawatt reactors. North Korea said the agency did not respond to Pyongyang's requests that it remove the equipment. The International Atomic Energy Agency said it was trying to keep communications open with Pyongyang. IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei said it was deplorable North Korea had ignored requests for talks.

January 10, 2003: On January 10, 2003, North Korea withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

January 23, 2003: North Korea and South Korea agreed to find a peaceful solution to nuclear crisis.

January 27, 2003: Former U.S. President Bill Clinton urged the George W Bush government to sign a non-aggression pact with North Korea, at the World Economic Forum in Davos. He argued that poverty was driving it to sell missiles and bombs, being its cash crop. The United States should "give them a nonaggression pact if they want that, because we'd never attack them unless they did something that violated that pact anyway."

February 26, 2003: Officials from the United States stated that North Korea had reactivated a reactor at its main nuclear complex.

March 02, 2003: In a continuing show of force, armed North Korean fighter aircraft intercepted and allegedly targeted a United States reconnaissance aircraft over International Waters in the Sea of Japan (East Sea of Korea). That was the first such interception since April 1969 when a North Korean jet shot down a United States Navy surveillance airplane, killing all 31 crewmen aboard.

March 06, 2003: Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld revealed that the United States is considering completely withdrawing U.S. troops from South Korea.

April 24, 2003: The United States, People's Republic of China, and North Korea met in Beijing for trilateral discussions about North Korea's nuclear weapons program. No resolution was reached, and tensions remained high. The United States has raised the spectre of sanctions against North Korea due to Pyongyang's 'brinkmanship'. In the past, North Korea has said that international sanctions would constitute a "declaration of war."

April 27, 2003: South Korea sent a delegation to Pyongyang pushing the North to end its nuclear weapons program.

May 12, 2003: North Korea declared the 1992 accord with South Korea nullified, citing U.S. hostility as a threat to its sovereignty. S. Korea responded on May 14 that since the U.S. has continued to proceed with its promise to build two nuclear reactors in the North, the accord is still effective. The South's announcement came as its president Roh Moo-hyun met with George W. Bush in Washington DC to discuss a common approach to North's pursuit of nuclear weapons.

August 06, 2003: North Korea and Iran planned to form an alliance to develop long-range ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads. Under the plan, North Korea will transport missile parts to Iran for assembly at a plant near Tehran, Iran.

August 27, 2003: The first round of Six-party talks begins at Beijing involving the US, China, Japan, Russia, North and South Korea. The participants in the six-party talks agreed to solve the nuclear problem peacefully through dialogue, to maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, and to pave the way for permanent peace. All the parties agreed to seek a fair and realistic resolution in a manner that is phased and synchronized or parallel in implementation. The participants agreed not to take actions that could escalate the situation in the process of resolving the issue peacefully. They also agreed to build mutual confidence, narrow the differences in opinions, and expand their common views through dialogue. The participants finally agreed to continue the process of the six-party talks and to decide as soon as possible through diplomatic routes the place and time of the next meeting.

August 28, 2003: North Korea announced that it is in possession of nuclear weapons, has the means to deliver them, and will soon be carrying out a nuclear test to demonstrate this capability.

February 25, 2004: The Second Round of Six-Party Talks was held in Beijing from 25th to 28th of February, 2004. Through the talks, while differences remained, the Parties enhanced their understanding of each other's positions.

April 09, 2004: North Korea said standoff with US at "brink of nuclear war".

June 23, 2004: The Third Round of the Six-Party Talks on North Korean nuclear issues was held from June 23 to June 26 at Diaoyutai Guest House in Beijing, China. At the meeting, both the DPRK and the United States (US) presented proposals that incorporated measures that were to be taken by the six parties as first steps towards resolution of the nuclear issue, after which each country in the talks, including Japan, presented concrete suggestions and recommendations. The six party found common ground in their understandings and proposals in the sense that focus is given to first steps towards nuclear dismantlement. However, there were some differences

in position between the DPRK and other parties concerning the scope of preliminary measures (whether or not to include uranium enrichment) and verification procedures; and (ii) while the DPRK aims for an agreement on freezing of its nuclear programs and compensatory measures, Japan, the US and the Republic of Korea (ROK) seek an agreement on a framework towards “dismantlement” of nuclear programs. The six parties will persistently continue their work through the working group and at the next round of the Six-Party Talks scheduled to be held by the end of September.

September 28, 2004: North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Choe Su-hon told the UN General Assembly that “hostile policy” of the United States was responsible for the nuclear standoff. At a news conference after his address, Choe said his country had converted 8,000 spent nuclear fuel rods into weapons. South Korean officials have estimated that this quantity of rods is sufficient to create up to eight nuclear weapons.

February 10, 2005: North Korea announced on February 10, 2005 that it had developed nuclear weapons for its self-defense. At the same time North Korean officials suspended participation in multi-nation talks to discuss its arms program.

July 26, 2005: The Fourth Round of Six-Party talks opened in Fangfeiyuan, Diaoyutai State Guesthouse at 9 am on July 26, 2005. The delegations from all the

six countries attended the meeting. By August 7, the talks reached a deadlock and a recess was called.

September 13, 2005: Talks resume, but a new North Korean request to be built a light water reactor prompts warnings of a “standoff” between the parties.

September 19, 2005: North Korea has agreed to give up all nuclear activities and rejoin the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. In return, the US said it had no intention of attacking the North, and promised aid and electricity. The agreement came during the second lag of the fourth round of six-nation talks in Beijing, aimed at ending a three-year standoff over North Korea’s nuclear ambitions. However, North Korea says it has right to “peaceful uses of nuclear energy and demanded light water reactor to be discussed at “appropriate time”.

September 20, 2005: North Korea indicated that it would not scrap its nuclear program or return to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) unless it was given light-water nuclear reactors. “The United States should not even dream of the issue of the DPRK’s dismantlement of its nuclear deterrent before providing light-water nuclear reactors, a physical guarantee for confidence-building,” the Foreign Ministry said in a statement, casting doubt on the agreement in Beijing.



JOINT STATEMENTS**Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks Beijing, September 19, 2005**

Following is a text of the joint statement at the conclusion of the fourth round of Six-Party Talks, as released in Beijing on September 19, 2005 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

Joint Statement of the Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks

Beijing September 19, 2005

The Fourth Round of the Six-Party Talks was held in Beijing, China among the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America from July 26th to August 7th, and from September 13th to 19th, 2005.

Mr. Wu Dawei, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the PRC, Mr. Kim Gye Gwan, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK; Mr. Kenichiro Sasae, Director-General for Asian and Oceanian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan; Mr. Song Min-soon, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the ROK; Mr. Alexandr Alekseyev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; and Mr. Christopher Hill, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the United States attended the talks as heads of their respective delegations.

Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei chaired the talks.

For the cause of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia at large, the Six Parties held, in the spirit of mutual respect and equality, serious and practical talks concerning the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula on the basis of the common understanding of the previous three rounds of talks, and agreed, in this context, to the following:

1. The Six Parties unanimously reaffirmed that the goal of the Six-Party Talks is the verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner.

The DPRK committed to abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs and returning, at an early date, to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to IAEA safeguards.

The United States affirmed that it has no nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula and has no intention to attack or invade the DPRK with nuclear or conventional weapons.

The ROK reaffirmed its commitment not to receive or deploy nuclear weapons in accordance with the 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean

Peninsula, while affirming that there exist no nuclear weapons within its territory.

The 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula should be observed and implemented.

The DPRK stated that it has the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The other parties expressed their respect and agreed to discuss, at an appropriate time, the subject of the provision of light water reactor to the DPRK.

2. The Six Parties undertook, in their relations, to abide by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and recognized norms of international relations.

The DPRK and the United States undertook to respect each other's sovereignty, exist peacefully together, and take steps to normalize their relations subject to their respective bilateral policies.

The DPRK and Japan undertook to take steps to normalize their relations in accordance with the Pyongyang Declaration, on the basis of the settlement of unfortunate past and the outstanding issues of concern.

3. The Six Parties undertook to promote economic cooperation in the fields of energy, trade and investment, bilaterally and/or multilaterally.

China, Japan, ROK, Russia and the US stated their willingness to provide energy assistance to the DPRK.

The ROK reaffirmed its proposal of July 12th 2005 concerning the provision of 2 million kilowatts of electric power to the DPRK.

4. The Six Parties committed to joint efforts for lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

The directly related parties will negotiate a permanent peace regime on the Korean Peninsula at an appropriate separate forum.

The Six Parties agreed to explore ways and means for promoting security cooperation in Northeast Asia.

5. The Six Parties agreed to take coordinated steps to implement the afore-mentioned consensus in a phased manner in line with the principle of "commitment for commitment, action for action".

6. The Six Parties agreed to hold the Fifth Round of the Six-Party Talks in Beijing in early November 2005 at a date to be determined through consultations.

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Released on September 19, 2005

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<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2005/53490.htm>

