

**Opening Statement**  
**Senator Richard G. Lugar**  
**Hearing on North Korea and the Six-Party Talks**  
**Senate Foreign Relations Committee**  
**June 14, 2005**

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee meets today to again review the status of the Six-Party talks in Beijing, intended to bring about a peaceful conclusion to North Korea's nuclear program. One year has passed since the last round of Six-Party Talks occurred in Beijing. This delay is troubling because the North Korean regime's drive to build nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction poses a grave threat to the Pacific region and American national security. We also are concerned about the transfer of North Korean weapons, materials, and technology to other countries or terrorist groups. In addition, we must remain vigilant to avoid a miscalculation that could unintentionally lead to war.

Joining us are Ambassador Christopher Hill, the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and President Bush's chief negotiator at the Six-Party talks. He is accompanied by Ambassador Joseph DeTrani, who serves as Special Envoy to the Six-Party talks. Both of our witnesses have approached these negotiations with innovation and energy. We are grateful to them for their commitment to pursuing a peaceful solution and for their willingness to share their thoughts with the Committee on multiple occasions.

This hearing takes place at a critical moment in the efforts of the United States to prevent the expansion of North Korea's nuclear program. Pyongyang has said recently that it will return to the Six-Party talks, which they left a year ago. But the North Korean regime has not provided a date or sufficient assurances that this will actually happen.

The Committee is eager to hear the witnesses' estimates of whether this offer is genuine. We also look forward to a clear explanation of the Administration's plan for dealing with the North Korean nuclear program.

Although I understand that there may be a need for some ambiguity in U.S. policy toward North Korea, it is not evident that this ambiguity has been constructive or even intentional. Frequent news reports and our own conversations with U.S. officials suggest that there are many opinions within the Bush Administration over how to proceed with North Korea. Each of these divergent opinions may have some validity and may deserve to be debated as part of the policymaking process. But if our policy is to be effective, our ultimate course must be internally consistent and explainable to our allies.

I am particularly concerned that as Secretary Hill and Ambassador DeTrani have pressed Russian, Chinese, Japanese and South Korean officials for cooperation in moving North Korea back to the table, their initiatives have been complicated by others who have leaked sensitive information related to Administration strategy.

For example, on May 7<sup>th</sup> of this year, a *Washington Post* article revealed sensitive and confidential details of discussions held between Secretary Hill and Chinese officials in connection with the Six-Party Talks. Chinese officials later protested to U.S. officials regarding the betrayal of confidence.

A great deal of planning and expertise has been applied to U.S. policy toward North Korea. But the implementation of this planning must be consistent. With this in mind, I am hopeful that our witnesses can address a series of questions that I believe get to the heart of the North Korea dilemma.

First, do we have any evidence that the North Koreans are serious about ending their intransigence and returning to the Six-Party talks? Or are recent statements by Pyongyang merely an effort to buy time or placate other Asian nations?

Second, if the North Koreans do return to the talks, do we have a reasonable expectation that some combination of factors could lead them to agree to a solution that would satisfy our core objective that their nuclear program be verifiably dismantled? If so, what are those factors?

Third, will the other countries involved in the Six-Party talks be willing to exert the degree of pressure on North Korea that most observers believe is necessary to achieve a satisfactory resolution?

Fourth, how will we judge when the Six-Party talks no longer represent a viable course?

Fifth, in the event substantive progress is not made in the Six-Party talks, what are our options?

Sixth, in dealing with North Korea, how viable is a strategy of expanded sanctions and isolation, which is favored by some within the Bush Administration? How would such a policy achieve our objectives?

We want the Six-Party talks to succeed, and we thank officials of China, Japan, South Korea and Russia for their countries' partnership with the United States in the Six-Party process. As I have stated previously, success at the table in Beijing could lead to an ongoing and perhaps expanded Six-Party format, as a venue for discussion on other Northeast Asia issues.

We welcome our witnesses and look forward to their insights on this extremely important subject.

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