



## On-The-Record Briefing: Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs and Head of the U.S. Delegation to the Six-Party Talks Christopher R. Hill

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**OPERATOR:** Welcome, and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. After the presentation we will conduct a question-and-answer session. To ask a question, please press 1, \*1. Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

I will turn the meeting over to Mr. Gonzalo Gallegos.

**MR. CASEY:** Actually, I'll start this one. Anyway, this is Tom Casey. Guys, welcome. First of all, glad to have you here this morning. I know we've got, for those of you that were in the gaggle, a number of questions about the latest agreement to come out of the six-party talks process. We wanted to give Chris Hill an opportunity to talk with you all today to both describe the agreement in a little more detail and answer what questions you may have on that.

So let me get right to it, Chris. And by the way, congratulations; hope the Red Sox do as well as you did.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, thanks a lot, Tom. Let me perhaps make just a couple of comments on the six-party joint statement that the Chinese released and maybe go to questions. I know people have had a chance already to look at it.

First of all, we consider this a significant joint statement, I think one that's going to serve us well as we get to the end of the year. It's important to understand that, of course, this does not resolve the North Korea nuclear issue by any means. We have, I think, a very important phase still ahead of us (inaudible) North Korea to abandon its actual fissile material and nuclear weapons. So we do have a lot of work ahead of us, but we're not going to get there unless we get through the current phase.

I think what is important about this are a couple of points. First of all, the North Koreans have agreed now to give a full declaration of all of their nuclear programs by the end of the year. Now they had previously agreed to full declaration, but we now have them on record as (inaudible) by December 31.

Secondly, as a first step toward the disablement of all of these programs, we have begun a disablement plan where they will-- we will send in a team, probably sometime next week - we'll have to work on the composite of that team -- and that we hope that we can get them in early next week and they can begin the actual task of disablement. We have chosen to start the disablement process on Yongbyon, at Yongbyon, with the understanding that there are other things that probably need to be disabled, but Yongbyon is where the actual plutonium (inaudible).

So our hope is that as we get to the end of this year we will have (inaudible) only shut down but also disabled -- such that if the North Koreans ever wanted to change their mind, it would be quite difficult to restart the program. Secondly, we have worked out and we have an understanding with the North Koreans to gain a resolution of the uranium enrichment (inaudible). So we have some specific ideas on that.

**OPERATOR:** Excuse me, sir, for interrupting. This is the operator. We have quite a few participants who are complaining they can't hear you, that you're breaking up. Is there anything you can do to adjust your phone?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I'm not breaking up. It may be my telephone, but so I don't know what I can do about that.

**OPERATOR:** Okay. Well, thank you.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Okay.

We will have -- I don't know when this phone problem started, but what we hope to have therefore by the end of the year is the disablement of the graphite moderator, that is the plutonium production; a full declaration, including a full declaration of the weapons-grade plutonium that has already been produced -- this is important because we need to know what they have out there somewhere; and then we would have a complete resolution of the uranium enrichment issue.

Now, as in all negotiations, to get something you have to give something, and what we're giving is further progress on our bilateral relationship. And what that will involve is we've agreed to work very closely with them to get them off the terrorism list. Now, this is a sensitive issue because this is a country that has been involved in terrorist acts in the past, notably the bombing of the South Korean cabinet back in 1983 in Burma, also the bombing of a Korean Airlines airliner in 1987. So there have been very specific terrorist acts here in the past.

Moreover, from the Japanese point of view, there's a great sensitivity because they want to see progress on the issue of the abductions, something that the North Koreans have admitted and apologized for. But from the point of view of the Japanese have not provided a complete accounting of these people and, indeed, have provided pretty scanty evidence for what happened to a number of these people. So this is a -- this whole issue of the terrorism list is a very sensitive matter, but we're committed to working through this and we'll continue to do so as denuclearization goes on.

So with those introductory comments, why don't I go to questions and I hope you're able to hear some of them.

Hello, sorry, go ahead.

**OPERATOR:** Are you ready for questions?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Yes, we are.

**OPERATOR:** Thank you. At this time we are ready to begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press \*1. Please record your first and last name when prompted. To withdraw the question, you may press \*2. Once again, to ask a question, please press \*1.

Our first question comes from Arshad Mohammed with Reuters. Your line is open.

**QUESTION:** Good morning, Ambassador Hill. Two things: One, the joint statement says nothing on the timing of the provision of the additional 900,000 tons of heavy fuel oil or its equivalent. Would you expect that to be provided to North Korea by the end of the year if it meets its obligations to disable the specified facilities and make a complete and correct declaration? If you hope to do that by the end of the year, given the North Korean capacity constraints on absorbing heavy fuel oil, what might be the equivalent aid that you would give them?

And lastly -- no, no, I'll leave it at that.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Okay, with regard to the heavy fuel oil, according to our agreement in February, we will provide during this phase of declaration and disablement, we will provide a total of 950,000 tons of fuel. You recall they received 50,000 tons of fuel for the shut down of the reactor.

Now, you're quite right North Korea cannot -- does not have the capacity, the port capacity nor the storage capacity, to handle all 950,000 tons in the kind of timeframe that we're looking at; that is December 31. And with this in mind, we made this the main topic of discussion in the August 5th, August 6th subgroup, or working group rather, on energy and economic assistance. And it was agreed that of this 950,000 tons, only half of it would be in actual fuel oil. The other would be in a -- in fuel oil equivalents. This would involve refurbishment of plants, of electricity plants, and also some increase in their storage capacity to handle fuel oil.

So we have an agreement on how to proceed with that and since it is agreed, we do not see this as an impediment to achieving our objective by December 31.

**QUESTION:** Do you think that the Congress is likely to agree to your providing what amounts to infrastructure to the North Koreans? I mean, the Congress would obviously have to be informed of this if the President decides to waive the restrictions on aid to North Korea. Do you think that's going to be a tough sell?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, you know, I think we have a plan for, I think pretty broad consultations with the Congress. Our first part of this assistance will actually be just fuel oil. And then looking beyond, we'll see what -- how we can contribute to this overall effort. You recall this is an effort not just undertaken by the U.S. but also by China, Russia, South Korea, and we hope Japan will join in once some of their own concerns are -- bilateral concerns are addressed.

So I think Congress will look favorably on a plan that involves more than just the United States. But we have to, you know, work through this and show them what we're doing.

**QUESTION:** Can I ask one last one? You talk about them -- the agreement says that they should provide a complete and correct declaration by the end of the year. But you yourself in the past have talked about how you thought the declaration was going to be an iterative process, implying that you'd get something, you'd go back, you'd have to check it. You only have about 90 days to go through some iterations of this, and if they give it to you on New Year's Eve, you don't even sort of have that. Do you actually believe that by the end of -- you know, by New Year's Eve you're going to have a complete, correct, definitive, all-encompassing declaration of their nuclear programs, including uranium enrichment?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, first of all, we don't start this process on New Year's Eve. We'll start this process this month in October. And so I take your point that it's a lot of work, but frankly we're used to doing a lot of work on this. And, yes, I think we can get there by the end of the year.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**OPERATOR:** Our next question comes from Anne Gearan with the Associated Press.

**QUESTION:** Hi, Mr. Ambassador. There's a timetable here for North Korea to provide answers and do things, but if I read it correctly, no specific timetable for the U.S. component of that. How quickly will you be able to get them off the terrorism list and what have you told Congress about how quickly that's going to happen?

**QUESTION:** Well, first of all, we're beginning some congressional consultations tomorrow, so I haven't been up to talk to members yet, but we will be doing that and we will be explaining how we think the terrorism list issue should proceed. First of all, I think any time you can sit down with a country and work out details of why they were on the terrorism list and how to get them off the terrorism list, this is important because it's in our interest to get countries off the terrorism list because, by definition, countries that are on the terrorism list pose a threat. And so when you take them off, it's because you believe you've diminished this threat. So we think this is in our interest to do this.

But I want to stress that this has to be done in a way that will not only support the overall six-party process, but also to support a process of normalization in the North Korean-Japanese relationship. So we work very closely with our Japanese friends and allies on how to handle this. All in all, I think this is doable. But I think it is going to require a great deal of effort. And one thing we will continue to do is to be in very close contact with the North Koreans to address this as we move forward. And in this regard, we are planning a series of meetings with the North Koreans next week to address some of these bilateral issues that are important, including having a -- you know, working with them on this terrorism list.

**QUESTION:** Have you promised them that it will happen by a date certain?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** We have a very clear understanding with them and that's why we're going to move very quickly.

**QUESTION:** Does that include a date?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** A clear understanding means a very clear understanding.

Hello.

**OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next question comes from Glenn Kessler with *Washington Post*.

**QUESTION:** Good morning, Chris. I just wanted to walk through a little bit of the language here, so I understand it.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, Glenn, I would be disappointed if you didn't want to walk through a lot of the language in it, so go right ahead.

**QUESTION:** I love this stuff. First of all, it mentions: provide the initial funding for the disablement activities. Is there any particular estimate for what that would cost?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Glenn, I think we have some people who are expert in this sort of thing, who've been involved with disabling of nuclear programs in other countries. We're going to have some meetings today to begin to figure out what type of team we need, what type of skills we need and then to identify those people. So the answer is we don't know yet.

**QUESTION:** You don't have any ballpark. You don't have a ballpark figure, if we're talking about 20 million --

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, I think there are ballpark --

**QUESTION:** -- or 30.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** -- figures, but I'm not the one to provide them.

**QUESTION:** I mean it's a baseball term. You can try.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I understand ballpark. I just didn't understand the figures.

**QUESTION:** (Laughter.) Okay. The -- in the section about the DPRK and the United States, it mentions: The two sides to increase bilateral exchanges and enhance mutual trust. You mentioned a series of meetings. Are we talking about anything more here or is it -- when you talk about bilateral exchanges, are there -- is this more than just diplomatic exchanges or is this?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** We would look for ways to address cultural exchanges and we're seeing things that could be -- we're looking for things that could be done there. There are a lot of U.S. institutions that have been interested in inviting North Koreans to them and there are things that we might do going to North Korea. So we believe that these type of cultural exchanges are appropriate in these circumstances, so we're going to look for ways to increase that.

**QUESTION:** I see. So maybe even more visas for journalists. Then it says later on --

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I don't think there are a lot of North Korean journalists who want to come here. Is that what you mean?

**QUESTION:** (Laughter.) I was thinking about U.S. journalists going there.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Oh. Oh, okay.

**QUESTION:** Then it says the United -- when it talks about the State Sponsors of Terrorism language and trading with the enemy, it says: The United States will fulfill its commitments to the DPRK in parallel with the DPRK's actions, based on consensus reached at, blah, blah, blah. What DPRK actions is that referring to? Is that referring to simply the disablement of the facilities by December 31st and the complete and correct declaration?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, Glenn, I think I've told you probably about a hundred times that we're committed to moving ahead on this. The precise timetable, that is the milestones as we move ahead, we're working through those. And in fact, we will continue to be in very close contact with the North Koreans on this.

We want a situation where they are able to come off the terrorism list, but when they come off the terrorism list we need to fulfill the conditions for -- we need to make sure the conditions are fulfilled that brings them off the terrorism list.

So at the same time, we're dealing with a great deal of sensitivity on this matter. It's not just a legal matter. There's also political sensitivity on it, and in particular there's sensitivity in Japan. So we're trying to manage all this in a way that will enhance the six-party process, enhance the denuclearization and enhance DPRK-Japan relations and, frankly, DPRK-U.S. relations. So we've got a number of things moving forward at the same time.

I think we can have this issue move forward in a way that does optimize all of those conditions, so that's what we're trying to do.

**QUESTION:** Right. I know. I understand that. I guess this language particularly struck me because it was very definitive. It says, "The U.S. will fulfill its commitments to the DPRK --"

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** We will fulfill our commitments.

**QUESTION:** " -- in parallel with the DPRK's actions."

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** And I just wanted to understand what actions are you -- is this referring to.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** We have an understanding with the DKRP as we go forward such that we will fulfill our obligations based on the actions that they're taking. And the actions are in some cases spelled out very clearly in the agreement, but there are also things that we've been talking with them about.

**QUESTION:** So can you --

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** These are diplomatic discussions and I just can't share them with *The Washington Post* right now.

**QUESTION:** Okay, all right. Well, I appreciate that. I just wanted to make sure I wasn't missing something.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I don't want to mislead your readers, Glenn. There is no question we are trying to move ahead with this issue because we think it's in our country's interest to do so.

**QUESTION:** Right. I mean, you saw Kim Gye Gwan's comments where he suggested that embedded in this document is a date certain, and in your comments to Anne's question you said this is a very clear understanding. And I just wanted to make sure I wasn't missing something important here about a December 31st date.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, I mean, what-- I am trying to leave you with the impression that we are trying to move ahead on this. In discussing dates, I have to look at that from the point of view of our overall objectives and I laid out for you a number of objectives here that are not easy to obtain simultaneously, but that's precisely what we're trying to do.

**QUESTION:** I see, okay. One last thing. You said -- it says at the beginning that DPRK agreed to disable all existing nuclear facilities and then it mentions the disablement of those three facilities at Yongbyon. Can you say what are the other nuclear facilities that would need to be disabled?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, for example, if it turns out they have a uranium enrichment facility, that would have to be disabled.

**QUESTION:** I see. So you're still at this point waiting to find out from the North Koreans what those other facilities would be?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, there's certain things that we know they exist already and we know they're up and running already or have been up and running. The Yongbyon facility is obviously the main one, although it was shut down in -- a couple of months ago. That's the one we wanted to have disabled. That's where the weapons-grade plutonium is produced. And you know, you've got to keep your eye on the ball here, to use another baseball analogy, and the ball here is the plutonium, to get that shut down and disabled so we don't have -- so our 50-kilo plutonium problem doesn't become a 100-kilo plutonium problem. That's why we have really focused on Yongbyon. That's where we think we can help keep Americans safer.

Now, looking beyond that, if it turns out they have an up-and-running uranium enrichment program, that too needs to be disabled.

**QUESTION:** But just so I understand it, laying aside the possibility of a uranium enrichment program, there are no other facilities beyond Yongbyon that at this moment the United States is aware of?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, I think there could well be other facilities, but that will be determined as we move forward through the declaration process.

**QUESTION:** Okay. All right, thank you.

**OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next question comes from Daniel Dombey with *Financial Times*.

**QUESTION:** Ambassador Hill, I was wondering if I could ask you two questions. First of all, if you could elaborate just a little bit for our readers on what disablement would mean specifically for Yongbyon since that is the facility you know about; and secondly, whether the fact that you've been able to reach this agreement indicates that there's no ongoing illicit North Korean nuclear cooperation with other states, say Syria for example.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, on the second point, you've seen that there is a pledge included in the text -- I believe it's paragraph three -- which speaks specifically to the issue of no proliferation. Obviously, as I've said many times, proliferation has always been a major concern of ours and it's something that we watch for very carefully and it's something that we need to make sure that if it's going on, that it not be going on. So that is obviously, you know, an issue. It will remain an issue of continuing concern. We feel the best way to deal with these sorts of problems, though, is through this-- is on this six-party platform and that's why we're addressing that sort of thing in the six parties.

Now with respect to disablement and the scope of disablement, disablement -- the concept here is to make it difficult to restart a nuclear program. For example, you shut down the reactor, you seal the reactor, but -- and that involves a certain already political disablement. That is, the North Koreans would not want to have to void a six-party deal, kick out IAEA inspectors, unseal the facility and turn it back on. But what we want as a sort of added confidence-building measure is that we go beyond that sort of political disablement to an actual physical disablement.

So you look at how you could do that. You can take certain components out of the facilities and, for example, take things out of a reactor such that they are not so easy to just put back into the reactor. For example, if you took a battery out of a car and just left the battery next to the car, that would not be real disablement because you could just put the battery right back in the car. But let's say you put the battery somewhere else or let's say it's the only battery in town and you -- and the battery is disabled slightly on its own, then it becomes more difficult to do. Or let's say in order to put the battery back in, it takes a long time in order to reinstall it. So there are various things like that.

Our technical people went there with this in mind a couple of weeks ago. There was an agreement on how to proceed on some of these and then we have the door open to proceed on some other measures. So we're looking for a disablement, that during the time -- and our metric being the time it would take should the North Koreans want to reverse all this -- during that time, we would hope to go on to the next stage, which is dismantlement, irreversible dismantlement, and also the abandonment of weapons.

So we hope that this whole discussion about disablement is a kind of theoretical issue; that is, they would never want to switch the thing back on. And during the time that we would definitely have during a disablement period, we would be able to complete the task. And I want to emphasize that as much as I believe in this joint statement, I think it's good news, et cetera, I think it will not be a success unless we are able to get to that next stage, which is to get rid of all the weapons grade or fissile material and dismantle the facilities.

**QUESTION:** Just to summarize if I may, then, so this is not the stage of pouring concrete over the sight and stripping it down, that dismantlement? This is --

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** That's called dismantlement. This would be something less, but you know, you've got to remember if you took the whole facility away and left with dirt and planted grass seed, that could take them five years to reverse because that's the time it took them to build the whole complex in the first place. So obviously, dismantlement's going to be -- or disablement's going to be a lot less than that.

But we also don't want a situation like in 2002, or between December and February 2003, they were able to turn the plant back on in two months time, that is, there was no disablement. It took them two months. We need many more months and ideally, I'd like to see, you know, around 12 months.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next question comes from Warren Strobel with McClatchy Newspapers.

**QUESTION:** Thanks. Chris, I'm still a little confused on two issues. I'm hoping you can help straighten them out. First of all, on the question of uranium enrichment, you said many times that there has to be complete clarity about a uranium program and I'm wondering, do you feel like you -- as a result of this statement, you have that or is it still an open question that has to be resolved? And it sounds like from your earlier exchange with Glenn, it's still an open question.

And secondly, on the terrorism list, can you describe to us exactly what North Korea has to do to get off the terrorism list? Do you want them to admit to the bombings and so forth that happened in the 1980s? Do you want them to promise never to do it again? Do you want them to turn over the people who were allegedly involved in those? Thanks.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, first of all, on the terrorism list, we've had extensive discussions with them on what needs to be done. We think we have a way forward on it. I don't think it would serve a useful purpose to give all those discussions -- to give the substance of those discussions quite yet. But at a certain point, when we actually move to do something about de-listing them, we'll have to explain the nature of the discussions and what the assurances have been from their side.

But I would say so far the discussions have gone along a very positive vein. And obviously, the process of denuclearization is a major part of that, but also assurances on the -- that there would not be additional state-sponsored terrorism. And also, as you recall in the 1990s, they signed up to some conventions, UN conventions on terrorism. So as we get forward -- as we move forward and as we get ready to do that, I think we will be able to talk about what the assurances and actions have been.

With respect to uranium enrichment, I think you concluded by saying it's all up the air. It's actually not up in the air. We have some really specific ideas for going forward. Again, I'm not prepared at this point to describe precisely what we're doing on that. But what I can assure you is when we get to the point where we believe there is clarity, we'll explain why we think there is clarity on this issue and why it's been resolved to our mutual satisfaction. We're not prepared to pretend the issue doesn't exist, if we -- if there's a concern that it does exist. So we're going to work through this. But we have raised it with the North Koreans on many occasions, and I think we have an understanding of what has to happen. And at a certain point, I think we can describe some of that.

**QUESTION:** Thanks.

**OPERATOR:** Thank you. Our next question comes from Jonathan Beale with BBC.

**QUESTION:** Yeah, hi, Ambassador. I just wanted to ask you, first of all, about the team that would go out to North Korea. Can you just tell us a bit about who they are and what they'll exactly be doing, how long they'll be there for?

**UNDER SECRETARY HILL:** Can't do it yet because I think we're having some meetings today to talk about what are the sort of technical skills we need and, you know, who's going to lead the team. And I think tomorrow we'll make some decisions on that and, you know, get moving we hope for next week. So I'm not quite prepared to describe it too much because it's a work in progress. You know, the agreement was just, you know, reached over the weekend. Except to say that based on the team we sent a few weeks ago, which was a sort of site survey team, the first look at some of these facilities, based on that I have every confidence in believing we'll get cooperation on the ground when the team does arrive.

**QUESTION:** Can I follow up just one other question, which is -- I mean, obviously, you believe you're making progress on the nuclear issue. I mean, you've got plenty of other problems in North Korea. I mean, this is a regime that starved its own people. I mean, do you feel that there is genuine political change happening in North Korea and not just on this nuclear issue but --

**UNDER SECRETARY HILL:** You know, I think that's a very important question and a very fair question, but -- and one that we need to focus on. But what I'm in -- I'm in the middle -- in the muddle of a nuclear, denuclearization agreement. It's not easy. They've had these weapons for a long time. To persuade them that these weapons should not be a part of their future -- indeed to persuade that they don't have a future without these -- with these weapons, you know, is proving to be a kind of a full-time job here. This does not mean to say that, you know, our concerns about this country will be over or frankly this country's problems will be over. But I do believe that if we can get North Korea to understand that it has a better future without nuclear weapons, I think that puts us in a better position to work with North Korea on other issues and to try to bring it into the family of nations. And it's a lot of work. It's a country that has prided itself on its isolation; frankly speaking, prided itself on its bad relations with neighbors. And you know, it's not easy.

But I think we're not going to be able to address those other issues without addressing denuclearization. Because I've said many times, I just think with denuclearization a lot of things are going to be possible, but without it we really can't move.

**MR. CASEY:** Chris, I know we're getting a little bit short on time. Why don't we just go for one or two more here.

**UNDER SECRETARY HILL:** That would be fine.

**MR. CASEY:** Okay, let's go with one of two.

**OPERATOR:** Okay. Thank you. Jonathan Karl with ABC News, you may ask your question.

**QUESTION:** Okay, great. Yeah, I have two quick things -- one I'm still a little fuzzy on the clear understanding. Can you just give me an idea of when the earliest this process can be completed in terms of taking North Korea off the terrorism list? I mean, is this something that could be done by the end of the year? Is this something that it would be much more -- take much more time, you know, something that couldn't happen until well into next year?

**UNDER SECRETARY HILL:** Well, Jonathan, I mean -- I understand your question. And you know, I just -- I've tried to explain this without using dates because what I'm trying to do is achieve something where everybody feels they're moving ahead and this includes the relationship with Japan, our relations with Japan -- relationship with Japan, the North Korean relationship with Japan, So I would rather leave it with the voluminous answers that I've already given to this question and try to explain that I think we understand what needs to be done and the North Koreans understand, and I think we'll achieve progress on this.

**QUESTION:** But can I just ask just -- is it unrealistic to think that this could happen by the end of the year?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Again, I think you're going to have to write your own headlines. I mean, I've kind of given my take on this. You know, there is -- we have a real understanding of what needs to be done. We know what kind of timeframe we're dealing with. We know the importance of that. We're in very close contact with the Japanese. And I'd kind of like to leave it at that.

**QUESTION:** Okay. So I guess I could say that it could happen by the end of the year; you wouldn't rule that out?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Again, I don't write your story for you.

**QUESTION:** Right.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I just give my answers as best I can. And what I'm trying to do is to create a situation that we make essential progress on denuclearization with the understanding that to get something in this world you've got to give something. I mean, these are genuine negotiations. This is not a question of us getting everything we want without giving anything that they want. So we have to work on that, give and take. And then we have to manage some very sensitive issues, and including issues with a very close friend and ally, Japan.

**QUESTION:** And then just one other question about the document?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** This is number five, but go ahead, Jonathan.

**QUESTION:** When it refers to the DPRK has reaffirmed its commitment not to transfer nuclear materials technology and know-how, has the issue specifically come up of North Korea's relationship in this regard with Syria?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Again, I think I answered this a while ago. The issue of proliferation, the issue of whether their nuclear know-how has been sort of on the -- you know, has been for sale, has been an issue of continuing concern for a long time. You can assume that we discuss these issues of continuing concern and we have received, obviously, assurances and pledges, but ultimately it's an issue that we have to -- for our own national security interests -- have to follow very closely on our own to be assured that our country's security is protected.

**QUESTION:** All right, thank you.

**MR. CASEY:** Let's make this the last question. Or the last five questions.

**OPERATOR:** Do we want to take one more?

**MR. CASEY:** Yeah, just one more, please.

**OPERATOR:** Okay, thank you. Our final question comes from James Rosen with Fox News.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Thanks a lot.

**MR. CASEY:** Oh, actually, James, it's you. You know, I think we're actually -- yep, I think we're out of time. No, seriously, go ahead.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Go ahead, James. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** I'm happy to serve as your foil. I hope that you can hear me all right, yes?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** No, I can't hear anything. Line's gone dead. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** All right, then. With this spirit of cooperativeness in mind, first a clarification. Is it your understanding, Chris, that only the core facilities at Yongbyon will be fully disabled by year's end, or, for example, will the nuclear testing site at which they conducted the test in October of last year Pungye, will that also be fully disabled by year's end?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, with respect to disabling by December 31, I think somebody pointed out that we don't have a lot of time. We're already in October. So you do have to make certain decisions about where you're going to put your people and what you're going to try to disable.

Now, the Pungye test site, which actually I've raised in six-party meetings, the way you would disable a test site is essentially to shovel a heck of a lot of dirt into a lot of holes. So the question is you've got a certain amount of time, so what are you going to use the time for? And we felt that as we get to December 31 what is very important for us is to prevent -- is to create a situation where we won't have more plutonium to deal with; that is, our 50-kilo plutonium problem doesn't become a bigger problem.

Now, the trouble with something like a test site is I think a lot of experts will tell you that if they want to go ahead and explode another nuclear device, they could do it at a number of places, not just Pungye, so you might be shoveling a lot of dirt in Pungye and not really getting a lot in response in terms of preventing them from testing a nuclear device.

So you know, like a lot of things in life, you've got to make some choices, and we went after the main nuclear complex where they produced plutonium.

**QUESTION:** Okay. And then, two very quick things, if I might. The fact that the DPRK has signed an agreement in which it now recognizes its obligation to clarify the HEU program, does the United States and the other four parties, do they regard this as tantamount to an admission that there is such a program?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** No. But it is an acknowledgement that they have to resolve it. So I think this is one where you have to stay tuned and see how the resolution looks. All I can say is it does have to be resolved and it's not one of these deals where, you know, they pretend to resolve it and we pretend to believe them. So it really has to be resolved. And as I said, we've had some really good discussions on how to deal with this. And all I can say is stay tuned.

**QUESTION:** And lastly, the State and Treasury Departments signed and issued fresh sanctions on both the Government of North Korea and on the Korean Mining and Development Corporation as recently as September 18. And I wonder if that subject of these new sanctions came up in the six-party talks and also what you think it says about North Korea's good faith, as we go along these processes of negotiation and declaration that the U.S. Government had to issue these fresh sanctions as recently as September 18 for ballistic missile proliferation activity.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Well, these sanctions, you're quite right, were in respect of ballistic missiles. I think they're also legally mandated. I don't think there was any choice on the U.S. Government's part, whether or not to go ahead. So you know, I think you're probably thinking from the point of view of the negotiator, you know, what's it like to be trying to negotiate while your government is imposing some new sanctions. I think, first of all, they're legally mandated and so, you know, we follow the law.

Secondly, they concern ballistic missiles. And frankly, you know, I would like to get to that subject at some point because we have a country that is exporting missiles to very dubious regimes out there and doing so in a way that I think can be disturbing to the peace and security of some of these other regions of the world. So I would very much like to get to this issue. A stab was made at it some years ago and I hope we can get to that. But again, James, as I tried to emphasize earlier, we've got this nuclear issue that we've really got to go after and see if we can get this resolved and then I think we'll try to take up some other issues, including missile proliferation.

**QUESTION:** So it sounds to me like you're sort of saying that this ballistic missile proliferation is part of the -- it comes under that general rubric of actions that DPRK has to take if it ever wants to see itself come off that terror list.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I didn't say that. I did say it's under the general rubric of issues that we would like to address because these ballistic missiles can be very dangerous. And so I would like to get to a missile regime at some point, but we're really trying to deal with this very serious threat of nuclear developments of having, you know, 50 kilos of weapons-grade plutonium out there, of having a plutonium reactor, which was churning this stuff out until just a couple of months ago. So we want to make sure not only is it shut down and disabled and that we have an agreement to get rid of the whole thing. So we've got a lot of work to do. And I hope as we build up momentum to this denuclearization process, we can get to other things, including missiles.

**QUESTION:** Now, those weren't such bad questions, were they, Chris?

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** I managed, I think. (Laughter.)

**MR. CASEY:** (Laughter.) All right. James, thank you. Chris, thanks a lot. Thanks a lot for joining us today. Thank you, everybody for being here. Appreciate the opportunity to talk about this issue. And somehow, Chris, I think we'll be hearing from you again in the not-too-distant future on this.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Okay.

**MR. CASEY:** Thanks, everyone.

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY HILL:** Talk to you later.

**QUESTION:** All right. Bye.

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