

Press Releases: Remarks With Traveling Press

Remarks

Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

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QUESTION: So earlier this week you spoke about making deeper progress –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yep.

QUESTION: – on the path towards denuclearization with North Korea this week, on this trip.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yep.

QUESTION: So what does that mean? How can North Koreans convince you that they are motivated and devoted to making deeper progress on this trip?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, so I'm not going to talk about specific negotiating positions that both sides are taking in the conversation. Here's the objective in broad strokes.

QUESTION: Yeah.

SECRETARY POMPEO: There have been many exchanges, exchanges at the level between the chairman and the President, exchanges that I've had with my counterparts, exchanges at the working level, some of this with the South Koreans, so lots of conversations. That's the senior meetings. The mission is to make sure that we understand what each side is truly trying to achieve.

QUESTION: Yeah.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Right. We know the end state. It was set out in the Singapore summit, four elements of it. So we know that piece of what we're trying to achieve. But how it is each side is seeking to approach that and how we can deliver against the commitments that were made.

And so there are lots of requirements for this. Each side has to develop sufficient trust so they can take the actions necessary to get to the end,

and then we're also going to set up the next summit. So we hope to at least – I doubt we'll get it nailed, but begin to develop options for both location and timing that Chairman Kim will meet with the President again. Maybe we'll get further than that. But he's got to –

QUESTION: So you don't have a date, a location?

SECRETARY POMPEO: There's no date or location yet set.

QUESTION: But after this trip, is it possible that you'll have that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yes.

QUESTION: Okay.

SECRETARY POMPEO: But I would guess there'll still be confirmation to do. There's complex scheduling, logistics issues –

QUESTION: Yeah.

SECRETARY POMPEO: – that we won't be able to resolve in the hours that we're on the ground.

QUESTION: But a general date, a general location?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Hope so. Hope so.

QUESTION: Okay.

SECRETARY POMPEO: We may not, but I think we will. We probably won't announce it, right. I know everybody wants to know, but negotiations don't take place in public.

QUESTION: But that's not a negotiation. I mean, that's a decision.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Sure, it is. Sure, it is. We're having conversations, moving conversations about how to achieve denuclearization. Every element of that – all the timing issues, the venue issues, those things all are material to delivering this fundamental transition between hostility on the peninsula and peace and well-being for the North Korean people. This is 70 years on, so every single piece of this is material to delivering against it.

QUESTION: When you talk about building trust, is the U.S. willing to make some moves to show that they are still building that trust?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We've done that. What do you mean, are we willing?

QUESTION: Additional. Additional.

SECRETARY POMPEO: What do you mean, are we willing? I mean, you ask that question in an odd way.

QUESTION: Well, what I mean is they've been asking for a declaration to end the Korean War, so I'm wondering if you're willing to show that you trust

them by offering that and –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Again, I'm not going to talk about any of the particulars of the negotiation.

QUESTION: Okay. So South Korea basically said that on this trip you should not press for an inventory of North Korea's nuclear programs –

SECRETARY POMPEO: I understand, but –

QUESTION: – because it would risk bogging down negotiations.

SECRETARY POMPEO: I'm not going to talk about any of the elements of the negotiations.

QUESTION: Okay. Are you bringing any letters, messages, presents from President Trump to Kim Jong-un?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I'm not bringing anything that we're prepared at this point to talk about publicly.

QUESTION: Okay. So no message from the President to Kim Jong-un?

SECRETARY POMPEO: The President said his message to Chairman Kim.

QUESTION: I don't know, there have been letters back and forth.

SECRETARY POMPEO: But he said it. He spoke at UNGA about this at great length.

QUESTION: Okay, all right.

SECRETARY POMPEO: And so yes, I've obviously got a message. The President has tasked me and our State Department team to deliver the outcomes from Singapore and to begin to find the – look, you have to remember the history. This is not the first team that's gone to try and accomplish this. There have been comprehensive agreements reached between the parties before.

QUESTION: Right.

SECRETARY POMPEO: And they foundered. They didn't work. And so this has to be fundamentally different from that. I believe what Chairman Kim and the President agreed to is fundamentally different. It's this idea that we will get to denuclearization in a fully verified, irreversible way and then we will actually deliver on the commitments to make this brighter future for the North Korean people.

And I think Chairman Kim too, that's – when I've spoken to him, when I've heard the President speak to him, when I've seen his public remarks, he's given every indication that that's his intention too, that he understands that this is the right thing for North Korea and that this is the – that he wants to be part of delivering this great outcome for his people.

QUESTION: North Korea has a delegation they just announced yesterday going

this week to Russia and to China, and then also having a meeting with Russia and China led by the vice foreign minister. What's your reaction to that?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So we talk with Choe Son-hui all the time. We know her as well. We know that China is going to be part of the solution. They'll ultimately be – when we get to the end, we will have signed a peace – if we do this well, we will have signed a peace treaty that ends the armistice, and China will be part of that. We welcome China's efforts to continue to enforce the UN Security Council resolutions. We've talked with them about that a great deal. We value their participation in this process, and so I think it's inevitable that the North Koreans are going to talk to their longtime neighbor, the Chinese.

QUESTION: It won't jeopardize what you can accomplish if they don't have everyone from the North Korean side at the table with the U.S. delegation?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Chairman Kim is going to be there.

QUESTION: Okay. And then China.

SECRETARY POMPEO: And by the way, she may be back.

QUESTION: She might be, yeah.

SECRETARY POMPEO: She might be back.

QUESTION: Right.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah.

QUESTION: I mean, they haven't said when she's coming back, so –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Chairman Kim – we anticipate that Chairman Kim will be there to participate and that Kim Yong-chol will be there.

QUESTION: Do you hope she'll come back?

SECRETARY POMPEO: These are the two senior leaders. It's up to Chairman Kim who he puts in front of us to negotiate with him to work with him on the solution.

QUESTION: And then with regard to China, given the increasing tensions, the Vice President's speech yesterday saying China is carrying out a campaign to undermine President Trump – how much more challenging does that make your conversations with Chinese officials on North Korea this week?

SECRETARY POMPEO: My conversations with the Chinese have consistently – they've made clear that this issue of the denuclearization of North Korea is important to them, that they want this to be successful. And they have said in spite of places where we have disagreements in other things – we've had disagreements on trade and the like – that they are determined to support our efforts to see this through to its completion, consistently since we first began this process.

QUESTION: Do you know who you'll meet in China yet?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I don't know that the meetings are set. I don't know that the – that my interlocutors – and if it's like the previous times, I'll meet with Wang Yi, the foreign minister and councilor, and then Yang Jiechi.

QUESTION: Okay.

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I would anticipate that's all I'll meet with.

QUESTION: Thanks, Secretary.

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