

Press Releases: Remarks to Traveling Press

Special Briefing
Mike Pompeo

Secretary of State

Hilton Hotel
Seoul, South Korea
June 13, 2018

MS NAUERT: And so this will be on the record, but again, we have the meetings with Japan and South Korea tomorrow, and so we're not going to get ahead of those.

QUESTION: So to make the most – the best use of our – most efficient use of our time, Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for talking –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Of course.

QUESTION: – with us. My question pertains to President Trump's decision to suspend major military exercises on the Korean Peninsula. There was a reason why these exercises have been done for all these years, according to the Pentagon, in terms of helping the U.S. practice its ability to reinforce in a crisis. Is this decision to cancel the exercises open-ended, or would you resume the exercises if you concluded the North is not engaging seriously in the talks? And can you tell, please, a little bit about the process for deciding to suspend the exercises? Did you ask for guidance from USFK, from DOD, from the South Koreans on whether and how to do this?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I'm not going to talk to internal processes and discussions that were had. But it – the President was very clear. I was present when the discussion took place. He made it very clear that the condition precedent for the exercises not to proceed was a productive, good-faith negotiations being ongoing. And at the point it's concluded that they are not, the President's commitment to not have those joint exercises take place will no longer be in effect. I mean, he was unambiguous about that and how he communicated it both I think at the press conference but certainly when he was with Chairman Kim as well.

QUESTION: I want to – could – the President also talked about you being in the lead of the negotiations in the future, and also that there will be a meeting I guess at the White House next week to discuss the – how you take it

forward. What are the next steps, and when will you be meeting with the North Koreans again, with Kim Yong-chol, for instance?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So on this issue it should be very clear that the President is in the lead. Having said that, I will be the person who takes the role of driving this process forward. I don't know exactly what the timing will be for our next conversation with North Korea. I would anticipate it will be fairly quickly after we return to our home countries. I don't know exactly what form that will take, but I'm very confident that by some time in the next week or so we will begin the engagement.

There was a great deal of work done over days and days and days in Panmunjom that led to the discussions that took place there in Singapore for whatever it was, 70 hours or 60 hours, whatever the two sets of teams were on the ground. So there's – not all of that work appeared in the final document, but lots of other places where there were understandings reached. We couldn't reduce them to writing, so that means there's still some work to do, but there was a great deal of work done that is beyond what was seen in the final document that will be the place that we'll begin when we return to our conversations.

QUESTION: I wanted to follow up just quickly on one thing that you said to Michael. Why would the President use the term "provocative," though, to describe the military exercises when that's a term that often North Koreans and the Chinese use, and we've said that they are – that they're long planned and for purposes of readiness?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah. I mean, I think – I think the President was very clear. His intention here was to put us in a place where we get the opportunity to have productive conversations connected to the denuclearization of North Korea. Our mission hasn't changed, right. A lot has been made of the fact that the word "verifiable" didn't appear in the agreement. Let me assure you that the "complete" encompasses verifiable in the minds of everyone concerned. One can't completely denuclearize without validating, authenticating – you pick the word.

The President's committed to that. He believes that having made this commitment to Chairman Kim, that so long as we were making progress and having good-faith, productive conversations that we were setting the right conditions for moving forward with those talks. I think that's what the President was thinking of when he made that commitment to him.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, I wanted to ask you about "verifiable and irreversible."

SECRETARY POMPEO: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: You said – the day before you said it's our only objective, our – it's clear we want that. It's not in the statement. Why it's not in the statement? And the President said it will –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Mm-hmm, it's in the statement. It's in the statement.

You're just wrong about that.

QUESTION: How is it in the statement? And I am also –

SECRETARY POMPEO: You're just – because "complete" encompasses verifiable and irreversible. It just – I suppose we – you could argue semantics, but let me assure you that it's in the document.

QUESTION: And the President said it will be verified.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Of course it will.

QUESTION: Can you tell us a little bit more about –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Of course it will. I mean –

QUESTION: – what is – what discussed about how?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Just so you know, you could ask me this – I find that question insulting and ridiculous and, frankly, ludicrous. I just have to be honest with you. It's a game and one ought not play games with serious matters like this.

QUESTION: But how will it be verified? Did you discuss that? Do you have –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Oh, we're – they're – the modalities are beginning to develop. There'll be a great deal of work to do. It's – there's a long way to go, there's much to think about, but don't say silly things. No, don't, don't. It's not productive. It's not productive to do that, to say silly things. It's just – it's unhelpful.

QUESTION: Well, I think –

SECRETARY POMPEO: It's unhelpful for your readers, your listeners, for the world. It's – because it doesn't remotely reflect the American position or the understandings that the North Koreans have either.

QUESTION: We're just trying to understand how it reflects what you asked that –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, and I just articulated that for you.

QUESTION: Okay.

QUESTION: Can I – just to help him with his question and as a question, the – a big issue is you – I think you identified yourself as been the pace at which –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, yeah.

QUESTION: – dismantlement might occur with the North, preferring a phased and somewhat prolonged approach and President Trump emphasized the need for rapid nuclear dismantlement. That issue is not illuminated in the document. In your private talks, have you had closure on that, and how and where does that

stand?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I'm not going to give any insight into where we are on private talks. You should know that that will be my practice every day we're in conversations with them.

QUESTION: I would just – Mr. Secretary, in Francesca's defense, I would say that you've been very specific on this idea of CVID.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: But the language in the document itself, if we're to take that at face value, North Korea makes no commitment in that – in that document that they have not made – that they have not made many times before.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: So the language is important and we want to be able to get a real sense for what exactly North Korea agreed to, and that leads to my question, which is: There is some skepticism about that given that KCNA now is saying that President Trump agreed on a step-by-step approach which seems to be inconsistent with what you had demanded previously. Are you concerned about the messaging coming out of North Korea that maybe they have a different idea of what was agreed to at the summit? And then we also had the President who got off the plane and said there is no longer a nuclear threat in North Korea, even though they haven't given up their weapons yet.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Well, I'm not concerned about what was communicated to the North Koreans and what I understand them to believe given the conversations – multiple conversations, not just the time with President Trump but certainly that time with President Trump. But I had had two conversations with Chairman Kim before that as well, I've spent even more hours with that – with Kim Yong-chol. I am confident that they understand what we're prepared to do, a handful of things we're likely not prepared to do. And you began your question with the same question that was asked earlier. I am equally confident they understand that there will be in-depth verification.

QUESTION: Was the North account of the meeting accurate when they said that President Trump had agreed to a phased approach?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I'm going to leave the content of our discussions as between the two parties, but one should heavily discount some things that are written in other places –

QUESTION: Can I ask one verification question?

SECRETARY POMPEO: – including from some of your colleagues.

QUESTION: (Laughter.) Fair.

QUESTION: Well, I was just asking about your interlocutors, the North.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yes, and I know exactly what was said.

QUESTION: The President also mentioned that North Koreans had destroyed test sites, including the missile engine test site. Have we been able to verify the depth of the destruction and whether or not there are permanent – permanently destroyed?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, the answer is: I can only answer that we do have a reasonably good understanding of what took place there and – but I don't want to get into the intelligence assessment. We've spent – I don't want to over – a reasonable amount of time developing our understanding of what took place there. It's always the case that our strong preference would be to have experts on the ground when these types of things take place; we gain a much more thorough understanding of what actually occurred and what may not have.

QUESTION: Would you like to accomplish major nuclear disarmament before President Trump's first term in office ends? Is that your objective?

MS NAUERT: This is the last question.

QUESTION: Well, let him do the last one because I –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Make sure – make sure – could you ask the question one more time? Because it seems very obvious to me. The question seems – the answer almost speaks for itself.

QUESTION: Well, the –

SECRETARY POMPEO: So maybe I'm missing –

QUESTION: I don't know. I'm not in the administration.

SECRETARY POMPEO: – so maybe there's something I'm missing.

QUESTION: I can't speak for the administration, but –

QUESTION: Well, maybe have you set any deadline by which –

QUESTION: Yeah.

QUESTION: – time the North Koreans must have done –

QUESTION: And would you like those major steps to be taken in the next two years?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Oh, yes, most definitely, absolutely. With respect to timelines, I don't want to get into that. There is a public timeline that's been – been out there, right – the North Koreans and the South Koreans have spoken of timeframes. The President has said, and it's common knowledge, the work itself takes some amount of time. We have big teams ready to go. We've been working on it for months to have all of the relevant parties from our labs, smartest folks – by the way, not just Americans, but partners around the world. We're prepared to execute this once we're in position that we can actually get to a place where we can do it. So I'm confident that the long pole in the tent will be our capacity to negotiate to that place, but I'm

hopeful we can move that forward fairly quickly as well.

QUESTION: So absolutely for –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, so most certainly in the President’s first term.

QUESTION: Well, and I’m sorry, what did it refer to?

MS NAUERT: Guys, the Secretary has to go. Guys.

QUESTION: And what in the President’s full term?

SECRETARY POMPEO: As you said, I hope we’ll see – you used the term major – “major disarmament,” something like that. Yes, we’re hopeful that we can achieve that in the next – what is it – two and a half years, something like that.

QUESTION: You’re hopeful, but have you set a deadline for the North Koreans?

SECRETARY POMPEO: We’re hopeful we get it done. There’s a lot of work left to do.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MS NAUERT: All right. Thank you, everybody.

QUESTION: Thank you very much.

SECRETARY POMPEO: All right. Thanks, everybody.

QUESTION: Thank you, sir.

SECRETARY POMPEO: You all have a good night.

QUESTION: Thanks a lot.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah. Get some rest.

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[Press Releases: Concern Regarding Bangladesh's Counter-Narcotics Campaign](#)

Press Statement
Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC
June 13, 2018

We are concerned by reports that at least 147 people have been killed and 21,000 arrested since early May by Bangladeshi security forces in a nationwide counter-narcotics campaign. We urge Bangladesh to conduct thorough and transparent investigations into all credible reports of extrajudicial killings. While illegal drugs are a scourge across the world, Bangladesh should ensure its law enforcement respect human rights and that their conduct is consistent with international standards and Bangladesh's own constitution, which includes a presumption of innocence and the right to due process. We look to the Government of Bangladesh to fully meet its human rights obligations.

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[Press Releases: Agreement on Macedonia Name Issue](#)

Press Statement

Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

Washington, DC

June 12, 2018

The United States congratulates Prime Ministers Alexis Tsipras and Zoran Zaev and welcomes the historic agreement to resolve the name dispute. This resolution will benefit both countries and bolster regional security and prosperity. Prime Ministers Zaev and Tsipras demonstrated vision, courage, and persistence in their pursuit of a mutually acceptable solution. We also commend the commitment of UN mediator Matthew Nimetz for his steadfast efforts over more than two decades to end this dispute.

We stand ready to support this agreement, as requested by the two countries.

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[Press Releases: Third U.S.-Brunei Senior Officials' Dialogue](#)

Media Note

Office of the Spokesperson

Washington, DC

June 12, 2018

The United States and Brunei Darussalam held their Third Senior Officials' Dialogue on June 12, 2018, in Washington, DC.

Acting Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Susan Thornton led the U.S. delegation, which included representatives and experts from various U.S. government agencies. Bruneian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade II Dato Seri Paduka Erywan Yusof led the Brunei delegation. The United States affirmed its commitment to the U.S.-Brunei bilateral relationship, which continues to grow in multiple arenas.

U.S. and Bruneian officials discussed broader regional developments and security concerns, including the D.P.R.K. and the South China Sea. Acting Assistant Secretary Thornton reiterated the enduring U.S. commitment to Southeast Asia and the central role that ASEAN plays in the Indo-Pacific region.

The U.S. and Brunei delegations reviewed their close bilateral security partnership, including the expanding cooperation in counterterrorism and through joint military exercises. The United States looks forward to concluding a bilateral General Security of Military Information Agreement with Brunei in the near future. The two delegations also discussed human rights, combatting trafficking-in-persons, and opportunities for expanding bilateral trade and investment.

The U.S. delegation highlighted the importance of deepening people-to-people ties, noting the success of the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) and Fulbright Program in Brunei. Both delegations look forward to holding the Fourth Senior Officials' Dialogue in the coming year.

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[Press Releases: Remarks at a Press Briefing](#)

Remarks
Mike Pompeo

Secretary of State

JW Marriott
Singapore, Malaysia
June 11, 2018

MS SANDERS: Good afternoon. Thank you so much for your patience. It's certainly worth the wait. Welcome to Singapore and the filing center here. We'll keep this short.

I'd like to welcome the Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, who will answer questions specific to the summit that will take place tomorrow. And we'll be around to follow up with other questions beyond that. Thanks so much.

Mr. Secretary.

SECRETARY POMPEO: Good afternoon. I want to give an update in advance of President Trump's summit with Chairman Kim Jong Un. As the President said on Saturday, this is truly a mission of peace.

This afternoon, the President called Prime Minister Abe of Japan and President Moon of South Korea. Earlier today, our Ambassador, Sung Kim, led a delegation to meet with Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui and his North Korean – or excuse me, her North Korean delegation. The talks continue this afternoon, even as we sit here now. They're, in fact, moving quite rapidly. And we anticipate they will come to their logical conclusion even more quickly than we had anticipated.

Before discussing the summit, I want to address a report in The New York Times that suggested that the U.S. team lacks the technical expertise on

dismantling North Korea's weapons program as part of these talks. I want to address that report directly.

For over three months, an interagency working group of over 100 experts across government has met multiple times per week to address technical and logistical issues associated with dismantling North Korea's weapons programs. They include experts from the military charged with dismantling nuclear weapons; the Department of Energy, including PhDs and experts from DOE labs; and officials from the intelligence community covering North Korea. Those same experts also cover North Korea's nuclear, chemical, biological, and missile programs.

These experts include dozens of PhDs who have expertise in nuclear weapons, the fuel cycle, missiles, chemical and biological weapons. They have advanced degrees in nuclear engineering, physics, chemistry, aerospace, biology, and other relevant fields.

On the ground in Singapore, we have a team that includes the President's senior most expert in weapons of mass destruction who can cover any technical needs that the meetings may present.

Any suggestion that the United States somehow lacks the technical expertise across government or lacks it on the ground here in Singapore is mistaken.

North Korea has previously confirmed to us its willingness to denuclearize, and we are eager to see if those words prove sincere. The fact that our two leaders are sitting down face to face is a sign of the enormous potential to accomplish something that will immensely benefit both of our peoples and the entire world.

President Trump believes that Kim Jong Un has an unprecedented opportunity to change the trajectory of our relationship and bring peace and prosperity to his country. We are hopeful this summit will have set the conditions for future productive talks. In light of how many flimsy agreements the United States has made in previous years, this President will ensure that no potential agreement will fail to adequately address the North Korean threat.

The ultimate objective we seek from diplomacy with North Korea has not changed. The complete and verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is the only outcome that the United States will accept. Sanctions will remain until North Korea completely and verifiably eliminates its weapons of mass destruction programs. If diplomacy does not move in the right direction – and we are hopeful that it will continue to do so – those measures will increase.

President Trump recognizes Chairman Kim's desire for security, and is prepared to ensure that a North Korea free of weapons of mass destruction is also a secure North Korea. The President has also expressed his openness to expanding access to foreign investment and other economic opportunities for North Korea if they take the right steps.

All the preparations for the summit have come together very nicely. The

President met this afternoon with Minister Lee of Singapore. It was an important opportunity to thank the Prime Minister of Singapore for his partnership in helping make this summit a reality. Singapore is home to over 4,000 American companies and is a longstanding commercial partner, and we thank them for their help in making this summit what it is.

The President also had a chance to visit with our embassy team here in Singapore and thank them for their tireless work to make this summit a success. For example, at tomorrow's summit, there will be some 5,000 members of the media from all over the world that will be covering this historic event.

President Trump is going into this meeting with confidence, a positive attitude, and eagerness for real progress. He has made it clear that if Kim Jong Un denuclearizes, there is a brighter future for North Korea. Tomorrow, we will get our clearest indication to date of whether Chairman Kim Jong Un truly shares this vision.

I'm happy to take a couple questions.

MS SANDERS: Mark Landler, New York Times.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, you said a moment ago that what you're aiming for is comprehensive, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula. And I wondered whether that represents a slight shift in what your position had been, because traditionally you've talked just about CVID, and now you're actually adding the phrase "on the Korean Peninsula," which reflects in part what the North Koreans seek, which is to denuclearize the Peninsula. Is that a shift in your position?

SECRETARY POMPEO: There's no shift in the policy. It is the case that we are prepared to make security assurances necessary for the North Koreans to engage in that denuclearization. That is, we're prepared to take actions that will provide them sufficient certainty that they can be comfortable that denuclearization isn't something that ends badly for them. Indeed, just the opposite: that it leads to a brighter, better future for the North Korean people.

MS SANDERS: Major Garrett, CBS News.

QUESTION: Following up on that point, Mr. Secretary, under the umbrella of security assurances, would that include removing U.S. forces now in South Korea? Is that something you're prepared to discuss with the North Koreans directly?

SECRETARY POMPEO: I'm not going to get into any of the details of the discussions that we've had to date. I can only say this: We are prepared to take what will be security assurances that are different, unique than have been provided – that America has been willing to provide previously. We think this is both necessary and appropriate.

QUESTION: Would it be erroneous to assume that that's not on the table?

SECRETARY POMPEO: You shouldn't assume from the fact that I don't give any detail here today that some question you posited has any merit.

QUESTION: But you know the sensitivity –

SECRETARY POMPEO: Yeah, you should – you should just – if you hypothesize something that's in it, and I refuse to tell you what's in it, you should assume that I'm simply refusing to tell you what's in it, and not drawing any conclusions from the negative inference that I think you're suggesting.

You should – you should know there's going to be a lot of work left to do. There's a lot of detail that's got to be provided. We are not going to conduct these negotiations in the open with the media; we're going to conduct them between the two parties so that we have an opportunity to have a real success here.

MS SANDERS: Michael Gordon, Wall Street Journal.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, it's clear what the U.S. expects from the North, in terms of denuclearization, but sometimes there's been a suggestion from North Korean officials that their concept of denuclearization might preclude the deployment of dual-capable aircraft on the Korean Peninsula, or even movement of aircraft carriers – U.S. aircraft carriers – toward the Korean Peninsula. Is this something that the Trump administration would be willing to discuss? Or is it something you can rule out? And do you hope to have a framework tomorrow that does more than just repeat the formulations used, dating 12 or 13 years ago, about denuclearization, but commits each side to taking specific steps?

SECRETARY POMPEO: So I think the first part of your question is the same question Major Garrett asked. It was a substantive question about what one side or the other may be prepared to do, and I'm simply not going to speak to that.

With respect to the second question, the context for these discussions is radically different than ever before. The backdrop against which these negotiations are taking, President Trump has said, in a way that is fundamentally different than before.

The President has made very clear: Until such time as we get the outcome that we're demanding, economic relief is not going to be provided. That's different. There was always this hypothesis that somewhere along the way, the Americans would take their foot off and allow those economic opportunities for the North, and thereby reduce the capacity to actually achieve the deal. We're not going to do that. So these discussions that it will take place tomorrow between Chairman Kim and President Trump will set the framework for the hard work that will follow.

And we'll see how far we get, but I am very optimistic that we will have a successful outcome from tomorrow's meeting between these two leaders. It's the case, in each of those two countries, there are only two people that can make decisions of this magnitude. And those two people are going to be

sitting in a room together tomorrow.

MS SANDERS: Catherine Lucey with the AP.

QUESTION: Secretary, the President says he'll know within a minute whether Kim is serious based on his "feel." These are obviously incredibly complex nuclear issues that have tens of millions of civilians in the crosshairs. Is it wise for the President to be going on his gut? And have you established any specific criteria for the conditions that lead him to walk out tomorrow?

SECRETARY POMPEO: The President is fully prepared for the meeting tomorrow. I have personally had the opportunity to make sure that he's had a chance to hear lots of different voices, all of the attendant opportunities and risks, and that we have put these two leaders in the right place.

As I said in answer to the previous question, President Trump has truly laid out a process here that is fundamentally different than the ones that we've gone through before. And I expect that the process from tomorrow forward will also be fundamentally different, with a resolved America working to try and provide an outcome that benefits both countries. That's different than what we've done before.

QUESTION: Can you tell us anything about the preparations, sir?

MS SANDERS: Jon Decker with Fox Radio.

QUESTION: Thank you, Secretary Pompeo. The last time that you took questions from us was in the White House press briefing room, and I had an opportunity at that time to ask you a question. The question I asked you is whether or not – or how can you trust the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Un. And I wasn't necessarily satisfied with your answer. I'd like to get your answer this time.

But I also want to flip the question, if I may, Mr. Secretary. How can Kim Jong Un trust the United States? And I say that after what happened at the G7 Summit, when many leaders of the G7 believe that the leadership of the United States cannot be trusted as it relates to what happened with the communiqué. So perhaps you can answer both of those questions. Thank you.

SECRETARY POMPEO: I'll take your second question one first. I think the hypothesis is ludicrous. The United States has been fooled before – there's no doubt about it. Many Presidents previously have signed off on pieces of paper, only to find that the North Koreans either didn't promise what we thought they had or actually reneged on their promises.

The "V" matters. The "V" matters. We are going to ensure that we set up a system sufficiently robust that we're able to verify these outcomes. And it's only once the "V" happens that we'll proceed apace. Right? That's what's been missed before. You know, we can go back to Reagan, "trust but verify."

At the end of the day, both countries are going to have to come to have sufficient trust in each other and to do the verification that each country needs that we've provided the things that are called for that we commit to in

the various documents that we sign, both tomorrow, if we sign a document and if we sign subsequent documents. But we'll each have to ensure that we do the things, we take the actions necessary to follow through on those commitments. And when we do, we'll have a verified deal. And if we can get that far, we will have had a historic change here in Southeast Asia, North Asia, and all around the world.

MS SANDERS: We'll take one last question. Phil Rucker, Washington Post.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, this morning at his hotel in Singapore, President Trump had harsh words for Prime Minister Trudeau. And what are you doing, as the country's top diplomat, to repair relationships with our country's oldest allies – closest allies in Europe? And do you agree with the statement made by one of your administration colleagues yesterday that there's a special place in hell for the Canadian Prime Minister?

SECRETARY POMPEO: Well, I came here today, here in Singapore, to talk about North Korea. But I'm happy to talk about work with our European partners as well. We wouldn't be in this place, we wouldn't have this historic opportunity, without the diplomatic work that's been done by our European partners alongside of us.

President Trump has led an enormous coalition, including those very same European partners, those G7 partners to which you refer, who have helped us get to this point. I have every expectation that they will continue to do that.

There are always irritants in relationships. I am very confident the relationships between our countries – the United States and those G7 countries – will continue to move forward on a strong basis. I'm unconcerned about our capacity to continue to do what we need to do to get the outcome we're looking for in North Korea as a result of what you described having taken place in Canada.

MS SANDERS: Thank you.

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