

State of New Mexico
Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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GOVERNOR BILL RICHARDSON'S REMARKS FOLLOWING TALKS

"I just concluded my meetings with the North Korean delegation led by Ambassador Han, the Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Nations.

I have known Mr. Han for several years – I worked with him when I traveled to North Korea in 1996 and again in New York when I was the US Ambassador to the UN.

As I have said, I am not an envoy of the Administration. I am a governor, but when I was asked, I agreed to meet to see if there was a way I could help my country. I support the administration's policy on North Korea.

Ambassador Han and I have met over the last three days in almost nine hours of meetings. As two people who have worked together can do, we discussed very sensitive issues frankly, but in a positive atmosphere. We discussed the full range of issues facing North Korea and the United States.

Ambassador Han has expressed to me North Korea's willingness to have better relations with the United States. He told me that the DPRK wants to solve the nuclear issue through dialogue.

Further, Ambassador Han told me that North Korea has no intentions of building nuclear weapons. He told me that in a dialogue with the United States, North Korea would discuss our concerns over verifying its nuclear program.

I expressed my deep concern to Ambassador Han about North Korea's withdrawal from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and its announcement today that it will begin missile testing. I believe that the North Koreans now understand the depth of international concern over the issue.

I believe our meetings were positive and constructive. They were frank and candid. I have discussed them fully with Secretary of State Powell. It is my firm belief that there will be a peaceful resolution of the current situation through diplomacy and dialogue. It is my hope that we will see a direct dialogue soon."

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