



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

News Release

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Contact: Pahl Shipley
(Santa Fe) 505.476.2202

New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson Reports Productive Meeting with North Korean Officials

Governor believes stage is set for progress at upcoming six-party talks

(Santa Fe, NM) – New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson today met for two hours with two diplomats from North Korea at the Governor’s Mansion in Santa Fe. The North Koreans asked for the meeting with Governor Richardson to discuss the upcoming multi-lateral talks regarding the North Korean nuclear weapons program. Two diplomats from the North Korean Mission to the United Nations, Minister Kim Myong Gil and First Secretary Song Se Il, were granted permission by the US State Department to make the visit to Santa Fe.

“My discussion with Minister Kim and Secretary Song was positive and productive and I am cautiously optimistic that there is the chance for good progress when the six-party talks resume on Monday,” said Governor Richardson. “I urged the North Koreans to take some action, such as allowing IAEA inspectors to return and shutting down their reactor, to show they are serious about solving the crisis on the Korean Peninsula.”

“As usual, the Governor has provided wise counsel regarding the steps that can be taken by the DPRK (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea) and the USA for better bi-national relations and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and bringing peace and stability to the region,” said Minister Kim.

The Governor has kept in contact with the US State Department regarding his communication with North Korean diplomats but he was not acting as an official representative of the administration.

“I believe the mood surrounding the upcoming six-party talks is the best I have seen in quite some time,” added Governor Richardson. “There have been no talks for 13 months, and during that time the North Koreans have launched missiles and tested a nuclear weapon, and tensions have been high. Now, I believe the door is open to progress.”

"The atmosphere for resuming the multilateral talks is now improved," stated Dr. K.A. Namkung, Governor Richardson's senior adviser, "and we can expect the Six Party Talks to be back on track after a long hiatus."

The so-called six-party talks include North Korea, South Korea, China, Russia, Japan, and the United States. They are scheduled to resume Monday, December 18, in Beijing, China.

Governor Richardson has dealt extensively with North Korea during his tenure as US Congressman, US Ambassador to the United Nations, and Energy Secretary. He has traveled to North Korea five times, most recently in October, 2005. This will be the second North Korean delegation to travel to Santa Fe to meet with Governor Richardson. The first visit took place shortly after he took office in January, 2003.

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