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STATEMENT BY VICTORIA NULAND, SPOKESPERSON

U.S.-DPRK Bilateral Discussions

A U.S. delegation has just returned from Beijing following a third exploratory round of U.S.-DPRK bilateral talks. To improve the atmosphere for dialogue and demonstrate its commitment to denuclearization, the DPRK has agreed to implement a moratorium on long-range missile launches, nuclear tests and nuclear activities at Yongbyon, including uranium enrichment activities. The DPRK has also agreed to the return of IAEA inspectors to verify and monitor the moratorium on uranium enrichment activities at Yongbyon and confirm the disablement of the 5-MW reactor and associated facilities.

The United States still has profound concerns regarding North Korean behavior across a wide range of areas, but today's announcement reflects important, if limited, progress in addressing some of these. We have agreed to meet with the DPRK to finalize administrative details necessary to move forward with our proposed package of 240,000 metric tons of nutritional assistance along with the intensive monitoring required for the delivery of such assistance.

The following points flow from the February 23-24 discussions in Beijing:

- The United States reaffirms that it does not have hostile intent toward the DPRK and is prepared to take steps to improve our bilateral relationship in the spirit of mutual respect for sovereignty and equality.
- The United States reaffirms its commitment to the September 19, 2005 Joint Statement.
- The United States recognizes the 1953 Armistice Agreement as the cornerstone of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.
- U.S. and DPRK nutritional assistance teams will meet in the immediate future to finalize administrative details on a targeted U.S. program consisting of an initial 240,000 metric tons of nutritional assistance with the prospect of additional assistance based on continued need.
- The United States is prepared to take steps to increase people-to-people exchanges, including in the areas of culture, education, and sports.

- U.S. sanctions against the DPRK are not targeted against the livelihood of the DPRK people.

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