



**Assistant Secretary of State
Christopher Hill Press Conference
Speech and Question-and-Answer Session**

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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE HILL: Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to see you all. I guess I was misinformed. I thought was coming here to give my views on next year's baseball season. But maybe we'll do that on another occasion. Let me just say that - let me talk about where we are in the six-party process, where we hope to be by the end of the year; and, I'd like to say, where we must be in '08, which is that two days ago, we had an American team go in to the DPRK. I talked to the head of that team, Sung Kim, a few hours ago. They are in Pyongyang and tomorrow will be going to Yongbyon, the site of the nuclear installation. And they will begin the process of disabling the DPRK plutonium production facilities in Yongbyon. This will be the first time those facilities have ever been disabled, and of course the idea of disablement is to create a situation where it is very difficult to bring those facilities back online, and certainly a very expensive, difficult prospect of ever bringing them back online. So this will be, I think, an important moment when it's done. They'll be going to Yongbyon tomorrow, and by Monday they'll begin their work.

We anticipate; indeed, we welcome the other six-party members taking part in these disabling actions. I know the Japanese government is currently considering how it will take part in this process. So it is our hope that by the end of this year, we will have a Yongbyon facility that is substantially disabled, and that from disabling we will go in a seamless continuum toward dismantlement, that is toward taking these facilities apart and making sure that they are irreversibly - that they're never again used for the purpose that they were used for before.

In addition, we look forward, probably in the next week or two, to begin to discuss with the DPRK a list of all of their nuclear programs that must be disabled and dismantled pursuant to the requirements set forth in the September '05 agreement, where the DPRK undertook the obligation to abandon all of its nuclear programs and nuclear weapons. So we look forward to beginning the process on the North Koreans providing us with a full declaration of their programs. This needs to be done through the six-party process, so probably the Chinese hosts will be convening some kind of meeting of the denuclearization working group to look at this full list, and we'll continue to proceed on that.

So in addition, as part of the process of providing us with a full list, we will be continuing our efforts with the DPRK and the dialogue that is already underway to deal with our concerns, very real concerns, about the status of their uranium enrichment. Clearly, we have to make sure that as we get to the end of this process, not only is there no plutonium being produced, but we also need to make sure that there's no uranium being enriched. So that is also an ongoing process. So by the end of year, we hope to be in terms of the road toward complete denuclearization, we hope to have arrived at an important milestone, where there is a complete disablement of the Yongbyon facilities,

where there is a full list of additional facilities which also need to be disabled, and the uranium enrichment is also resolved to mutual satisfaction.

This means that as we begin '08, we need to focus very much on the fact that North Korea has already produced some 30, 40, 50 - we will know precisely from the declaration - kilos of weaponized plutonium. So that is something that the DPRK needs to abandon pursuant to the September '05 agreement. In addition, we would look, as I mentioned earlier, to move from disabling to dismantling of the nuclear facilities. In order to get something like this, you have to give something. This is a negotiation. So it is a tough negotiation. I've done a number of these in my diplomatic career. None were as difficult as this. So we have agreed - the six parties have agreed - to provide an additional 950,000 tons of fuel oil for the disablement phase. And as we go forward to the dismantlement and abandonment phase, we can anticipate additional energy requests from the DPRK.

In addition, a number of us have agreed to move ahead on our bilateral relationships. Japan and the DPRK have an ongoing bilateral working group, as does the United States. From the US perspective, we made very clear to the DPRK that we are prepared to achieve normalization of our relations, but we will not normalize relations with the DPRK until the DPRK is fully denuclearized; that is, there will be no normalization of relations with a nuclear DPRK. But we are prepared to move along this road. It doesn't mean that all our disagreements with the DPRK will be over, but it does mean that if they denuclearize, we can have a normal relationship, where we will continue our dialogue as we deal with disagreements as we do with many other states in the world.

In addition, the United States has agreed to participate in an effort to end the Korean War by replacing the armistice with some sort of peace process. We are prepared to begin our participation on substantial disablement by the end of this year, but we are not prepared to conclude a peace process, a peace mechanism on the Korean Peninsula - we are not prepared to conclude that until there is denuclearization; that is, again, we cannot get to the end until the DPRK gets to the end of denuclearization. Finally, the United States is also prepared to participate in the overall creation of a Northeast Asian peace and security dialogue or forum. The purpose of this is to begin the process of building a neighborhood in Northeast Asia. In no way is it designed to replace the very key bilateral relationships, the bilateral alliances that the United States has and is very proud to have with a number of countries in Asia, including with Japan and with the Republic of Korea. But it is an effort to begin, I think, a long-term project building a sense of neighborhood in Northeast Asia. And I do like to believe that the six-party process, as difficult and is frustrating as it has been over the months and years, has gotten a start on getting countries in the region to work together toward a common goal. And so we would look to see that once this denuclearization is achieved, we can continue to build

on the foundation of the six-party process so that we can have a more permanent forum on the landscape of Northeast Asia. So with those sorts of introductory comments, let me maybe go to questions.

QUESTION: Nakai of Mainichi Newspaper Company. Ambassador Hill, thank you for coming. DPRK transfer of nuclear technology to Syria or proliferation to Syria is emerging as an issue. In your negotiations with DPRK, have they guaranteed that they are not proliferating nuclear technology to Syria? Have you ever obtained that guarantee from DPRK? Now without such guarantee, if you have not obtained such commitment, assurance from DPRK, will this be linked to the six-party talks? Or will the six-party talks not consider this Syria issue as one of the obstacles?

A/S HILL: Well, first of all, our interest in being engaged in a six-party process stems from our concern about the DPRK's possession of nuclear weapons and what it means in the region, to the stability of Northeast Asia, but also (what it) mean(s) in terms of proliferation. Proliferation has been a primary concern of ours all along. We have approached the DPRK on the subject many times. We have received assurances that they will not transfer and have not been transferring or engaging in proliferation. On the other hand, we have to be vigilant about this, and we have to be really continuing to watch closely areas of concern, areas of the world where we have our concerns, including in Syria. So we have to be very much on top of this matter. I think as much as we value the DPRK making a declaration - and you saw in the October 3 agreement that they did make a declaration of no transfer - I think that's not enough for us. I think we have to be very vigilant and continue to watch for this problem. I believe the six-party process is the appropriate process for dealing with proliferation.

The issue one faces when one hears reports of this is, what are you going to do about it? Do you stay engaged? Do you keep working on it diplomatically? Or do you somehow pull back from the diplomatic process? And we feel it's very necessary to stay engaged, because when you pull back from something, you have to ask yourself the question, where are you going? What is the strategy you are trying to devise in order to achieve a goal? And so as we stay in the process, our strategy is to be diplomatically active, to work with our partners, to continue to work with partners in the six-party process, but also to emphasize the various counterproliferation measures that we have, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative. So we feel that staying engaged is the way to keep other countries also engaged, and ultimately is the way to deal with the threat posed by proliferation.

QUESTION: Hayashi of NHK. I have two questions. First of all, very shortly the (delisting) process will begin. Specifically what will this process involve? Japan is very interested in delisting of DPRK from the list of state sponsors of terrorism. It seems that

what you're explaining to Japan and what you're explaining to DPRK may or may not be different. Are they truly consistent, what you are explaining to DPRK and Japan? Those are the two questions.

A/S HILL: Well, they are consistent. The DPRK wants very much to be delisted. And we are prepared to work with them; indeed we are obligated according to the February agreement to have begun this process, which we have begun. And whether or not we get to the end of this process, of course, depends on future developments. It's not just dependent on denuclearization: it's also dependent on the statutory requirements of this US law with respect to the terrorism list. I think it's important to understand that this is a US list, US law passed by the US Congress, supported by the US president. So we are doing in the US is to work with the DPRK to ensure that if they want to be delisted, that they have to qualify to be delisted. Now you don't delist a country because they have done something in some other area where you want them to do something. They have to address the terrorism concerns that put them on the list in the first place. So we will be working with them on that. I think it's in our interest that when there are countries on the terrorism list, it needs to be understood that they are on the list for a reason. They are on the list because they've been supporting terrorism in some respect. So it's in our interest to get countries to stop supporting terrorism and therefore to get off the list. So we are working with them. I don't want to make a prediction now of where we end up on this.

But I will say that we understand very well the great sensitivity of this terrorism list. We understand that even though it is a US list and a US law passed by a US Congress and signed by a US president, that nonetheless it has international repercussions, including in some countries; in Japan itself. We are in very close contact with Japan on this issue. We are in very close contact with Japan on our mutual efforts to achieve progress, achieve meaningful progress on the matter of the Japanese citizens so brutally abducted some years ago by the DPRK. So we will continue to work very closely with Japan on this issue of delisting and the relationship of this issue to the abduction issue.

QUESTION: Could you repeat the first question with regard to disablement? What's the actual process involved in disablement?

A/S HILL: Sorry. What was the first part of your question? On disablement, we have agreed on a number of measures. We met in a denuclearization working group in Shenyang; I think it was August 16. And we came up with a list of measures that were designed to make sure that in shutting down the nuclear facilities that they couldn't easily be turned on again. So we negotiated the list with the North Koreans. It was one of these tough negotiations. They wanted us to do less, and we wanted them to do more. But we came up with a list of measures, which in their totality, we believe, will make

sure that even if on a certain day the North Koreans wanted to restart the plutonium, which by the way would be a very bad day for all of us, that it would take them well over a year to do that. So we have a concept that disabling should be something that, in order to reverse the disabling, you would need more than a year.

So the disabling involves measures, very technical measures in the three parts of the Yongbyon complex. First, the fuel fabrication facility. Second, the actual 5 MW reactor. Thirdly, the reprocessing facility, where the spent fuel rods would be taken from the 5-megawatt reactor. So these are technical measures that we will work with North Korean engineers on. One of the first that needs to be done is we need to do some cleanup of the pond where the discharged fuel from the reactor needs to go, because eventually we want the discharged fuel to be canned and sent out of North Korea. And so in order to do that, we're going to have to clean the pond up. So that's one of the things that's going to get done in the next couple of days, or started to get done, because discharging fuel will take many weeks. We also, I think, will begin with some measures that are fairly easy to accomplish in the reprocessing facility. And we will continue from there. Altogether, I think the process is going to take a full two months. And even at the end of December, when we will have substantial disabling, we need to be careful not to hurry things in a way that could cause any health risk to anyone working on the process. So we'll have to be careful on that. But I think by the end of all this, you'll see that we have a Yongbyon that is disabled and ready for the next stage, which is to be dismantled. And so far I'm pleased to say we've had good cooperation from the DPRK technicians and experts on the spot.

QUESTION: Miyata of Asahi Newspaper Company. I have a question with regard to plutonium. By the end of the year, you said, Ambassador Hill, in the declaration list already the plutonium extracted, the nuclear-bomb substances, will probably be included. What is the attitude on the part of DPRK with regard to this list? And if they have agreed to include that in the list, then what would be the process to follow? In other words, will plutonium be included as a subject of denuclearization? And what is the position of the DPRK?

A/S HILL: We are expecting to get the list, the initial list very soon. And so I'll be able to answer your question a little better when I actually see the list. But one thing that we have had considerable discussions about already is the need that - the full list of nuclear programs needs to include nuclear material. And the DPRK, at the working group on denuclearization - the six-party working group on denuclearization in Shenyang on the 16th of August - told us it would include the material, that is all of the fissile material, that is the separated plutonium. This is going to be very important because what we will need to see on the fissile material is a list that we can verify, because again, this is the crucial question. Do they have 30 kg? Do they have 40? Do they have 50? How much

of that was used during the nuclear test that they made in October '06? And when we come up with the figure, we need to verify that figure. So the answer to your question is yes, this is expected to be on the list. And I would argue that there are a number of other nuclear programs not at Yongbyon that also need to be on the list. And remember, we started with Yongbyon because we thought that was the most achievable objective by the end of this year, but it's not the only nuclear facility that needs to be put out of commission. I would expect that as we get this list of plutonium, we'll be able to verify it, and then we'll know what we are dealing with as we get to what I hope will be the final phase in '08.

QUESTION: [inaudible] from Italian Sky 24 News. Two small questions. The first one is, did you know - since you mentioned that the Japanese authorities are considering sending their own team to check about the disablement of Yongbyon, do you feel that there has been a change in the new government toward more constructivity and pragmatism compared with the last Abe administration? And the second one is since we are almost the last year of the Bush administration, you know that in 2000 that Clinton was very close to deliver a deal with North Korea. How would be your prediction, if you can give us a prediction about the possible delivering by the Bush administration right before elections?

A/S HILL: Well, I only make predictions in baseball (laughter), so I don't know if I can make a prediction on your point there except to say I've had a lot of discussions with the DPRK representatives on my concern - I think everybody's concern - that we not run out of time. And I think if you looked at what happened in 2000, we ran out of time. And I don't want that to happen. That's one of the reasons we're pushing this thing to try to get disablement through December 31, because a lot of people point out, well wait a minute: can you really get it done by December 31? Aren't there other things you need to disable? I need to make sure the dismantlement/abandonment phase starts on January 1, if not, on January 2, so that we have a chance to get through that. So I'm very mindful of the concern about the running out of time. I've had those conversations with the DPRK, and I believe they understand why we are pushing these deadlines, and they support the idea of getting through this in '08. But those are expressions of support in a general sense. And nuclear weapons and things like that are real proof of the old adage, "the devil is in the details," because there are a lot of details in this issue, and we've got to get through a lot of those.

Let me just say with respect to dealing with the Japanese, I don't think there's a negotiating team that we've had closer relationships with than the Japanese negotiating team. And this has gone on for me since the Koizumi premiership. So I've worked very closely with Sasae-san on these issues. These are tough issues for everybody. You know, having a six-party process - I mean, Japan is in a very special place, because not only is

it really in the shadow of some of these nuclear threats, it's also in the shadow of missile threats; and it's very much burdened by the shadow of this terrible abduction matter. So we have to fully factor in and fully understand Japanese sensitivities on this, and that's why I spend a lot of time with my Japanese counterparts. You should see my phone bill. You know, I'm calling Tokyo. So I think we have good cooperation. It's not for me to sort of talk about Japanese government attitudes to their own negotiations. You know, they have a bilateral process the way we do. It's not for me to say, should they give more or should they give less? How flexible should they be? That's really for them to do. Except to say that I can assure you, we have very good relations with Japan, and we are not engaged in a six-party process in order see our relationship with Japan worsen. On the contrary, we see this as a real example where the US and Japan, with a common interest - the number-one, number-two economies in the world - we ought to work together, and I think together we're going to solve this.

QUESTION: Nishimura of Hokkaido Newspaper. Ambassador Hill, last month at Congress when you testified (about) fuel oil supplied to DPRK, 50,000 by South Korea, next China, and thirdly US, and fourthly Russia; that is the expectation, you said. And with regard to Japan, because of the abduction issue, Japan has not yet participated. I think that's what you reported to the Congress last month. Now Japan and DPRK, without the abduction issue being settled, fuel oil will stop at Russia, or will there be a second round starting once again with South Korea? So what is the position of Japan in fuel-oil aid?

A/S HILL: Well, I can't really talk about the position of Japan on this, but what I can do is tell you that when we agreed that we would provide 50,000 tons of oil for the shutdown, and then if the DPRK wanted more oil, which they did, we said, "Well then, shutdown is not enough. Freezing is not enough. We have to go to disabling." And so we agreed that they would disable the facilities for an additional 950,000 tons. Now the South Koreans took the first shipment, the 50,000, which was the shipment of oil in return for which the DPRK froze or shut down for the purpose of eventual abandonment to nuclear facilities. And so the South Koreans didn't want to be the only people supplying oil, so we did an addendum to the agreement in February '07 in which four countries agreed to participate. And Japan agreed to participate once its concerns were met, and as I've just mentioned to the previous question, I think Japan has a lot of particular issues, namely the abduction issue, that it feels it needs to make progress on. And so it was agreed that Japan would join as its concerns were met.

So we have done tranches of oil, that is, 50,000 tons each. Now why 50,000 tons? That seems to be the maximum that the ports will take in the DPRK, so after we go through this first round, we would anticipate just going through a second round and a third round. Again, when Japan is able to participate, I'm sure Japan will participate, but you

know, it's not for me to be, you know, advising Japan on that. I think we understand that Japan has some very special issues here. So we will continue to proceed on this. I might note too that other countries have inquired about whether they can participate in this process, and we've welcomed other countries, and I think we'll look to see if other countries can come in.

What's important, I might mention - a little pause to mention a little more on this oil situation - we are not paying oil in order for North Korea to do nothing, to stand in place. We're giving them oil in order for them to go deeper into denuclearization. If they want more oil, they need to do more denuclearization. So when the 950,000 tons finishes, if they want more of that, they need to move to the next phase, and we've been working very hard on that. It is not in our interest or anyone's interest to starve the DPRK of energy. On the contrary, it's to show the DPRK that they can get out of this nuclear business, which has been very, very harmful for their position, and can get energy through other means and can eventually be in a better position with energy thanks to giving up their nuclear ambitions.

QUESTION: Wayne Hardin, Washington Post. I have a question about the diplomatic efforts of North Korea in recent weeks. They've sent envoys to a number of countries where they haven't been recently, trying to open up more to the West and the rest of the world. Do you see this of a piece with the agreements that are occurring in the denuclearization issue? In other words, do you have a judgment about something changing in North Korea that is opening up and trying to change their position vis-a-vis the rest of the world?

A/S HILL: Yeah. You know, I saw that article. I can't remember if it was in the Post or the Times; probably both. But - AP - OK; I saw that article. I read it with great interest, because the notion that their cooperation in the six-party process is being accompanied by a diplomatic effort to expand their recognition - it's an interesting concept. I can't say that I've seen how it is linked except to say that as they participate in the six-party process, there does appear to be, in the context as we talk to them in the six-party process, the desire to overcome their isolation, and an understanding that whereas in the past North Korea often spoke of their isolation as a great benefit for their country, I think they've understood it now as something that is actually harming them, and that the best-case scenario for what they're doing is to believe that perhaps it is part of an overall effort to open up.

I do believe that the DPRK understands that isolation in the 21st century is not a ticket to the future. Quite to the contrary, it will leave the DPRK further behind. It's so interesting to look at economic growth statistics in East Asia and see that the two countries in East Asia that did not grow last year, that had negative growth, were the

DPRK and Burma. And if you look at the degree of interaction that those countries have with abroad, you'll see that both of them are really very isolated. Burma's trade, for example, is a tiny fraction of Vietnam's trade. So I think there is an understanding. It's the sort of thing that, if you had sort of wide open North Korean interlocutors, you would ask them. You'd say, "Well, what's this about?" But alas, they kind of keep pretty much task-oriented, and if they're there to talk about denuclearization, they talk about denuclearization. They don't engage in a broader discussion on that, unfortunately. But I do have the sense that they understand that they need to open up. I also have the sense that they are doing this with great care, that not everyone in the DPRK agrees with this position, and that it's going to be a slow process. But I think it's a very necessary process. And I might add that the Chinese, who probably know the DPRK best, believe that there is an effort on the part of the DPRK to open. The Chinese believe that some of their efforts to show DPRK officials the new economy are providing some kind of incentive for the DPRK to open up. So I think it's an interesting development.

I might just mention one other point: I thought it was very interesting that they have done so much with Vietnam, because Vietnam is a country which also was very closed with a very stagnant economy, and now it's opening up and it's made an awful lot of progress. The DPRK and Vietnam went through a very rough patch a few years ago, when Vietnam helped get some DPRK refugees on to South Korea, so it is interesting that they've reached out again to Vietnam, and I think it's something to keep our eye on, and I believe it's a positive development.

And one other thing: I think it's positive because we have been very diplomatically active in making sure every country understands: one, we are doing all we can to get this thing solved, this denuclearization issue solved; and two, we need all the help we can get to make sure that every message coming from every country that the DPRK engages with is the same message, which is that you get out of the nuclear business, and you'll have a much better future.

QUESTION: Chio Nakamoto, Financial Times. You mentioned the many requirements for the DPRK to be delisted from the list of countries that support terrorism. How far would you say they are to the end of the road? Are they midway? Are they way down the road? How far do you think they are to the end?

A/S HILL: I don't know. I think, you know, these requirements are embedded in US law, so we've had some of our lawyers actually talk to them about what they need to do to achieve the US statutory requirements. I think they have to come out with some kind of declaration, so I think the answer to your question would be - has to await their declaration, to see whether they have taken the steps they need to take, but these steps are embedded in US law. They're for all to see, and so we have to see if the North

Koreans are prepared to take them. You know, there are a couple of steps that we know they have taken, which are very important. That is the UN covenants on terrorism, and they acceded to those in the 1990s, but clearly there will be other things. But we're working with them, again with US lawyers, because this is a matter of US law.

QUESTION: Deguchi of Kyodo Press. It's a related question to the previous one. The Department of State comes up with its Country Report on Terrorism on an annual basis, and in terrorism state sponsors there was one item that they continue to protect the hijackers of the airplane, and in order for them to be delisted, the sending of those criminals back to Japan, that extraditing is also a requirement? And have you required that to the DPRK?

A/S HILL: Let me just say, that issue has come up. I think we can reach a satisfactory result on that. I'm not sure - I really should have a State Department lawyer here to answer the question of whether it's a statutory requirement that they would have to return the Japanese Red Army terrorists from the 1970 hijacking, so I'm not sure if it's a statutory requirement. I should check with our legal people on that. The issue has come up. I must say, what I've been careful to do on dealing with this is, you know, we'd like to see progress on this abduction issue, and I would like to focus to the extent that there would be people coming out of the DPRK and back to Japan. I would like it to be abductees. That's sort of our focus. I don't want any thoughts that, you know, they could satisfy one request by fulfilling another. So I think that we'll work through that issue, but again I don't feel comfortable answering your question on the legal issue. Again, I can't emphasize enough: This is US domestic law. It's in our Congress. It's not an international law; it's a US law that has created this terrorism list.

QUESTION: Inoue of TBS. The timing of taking them off of the terrorism list: is there any understanding with the North Koreans if there is a notification to the Congress, which is 45 days prior to the actual removal? The notification to the Congress is equivalent to the actual removal from the list?

A/S HILL: First of all, I can tell you're a Washington correspondent because you know our law better than many Americans do, so congratulations. The 45 days is a notice period. It goes to Congress. Now we have notice periods in a lot of US laws, so the point of a notice period is to give some opportunity from the Congress to express its views on a decision that the administration is prepared to take. Now once the federal government has sent a notice to Congress, it means that all - that the federal government has made a decision that everything is done and ready to go. That is, whatever issue it is - often, for example, we have notice requirements for foreign military sales, so let's say you have a foreign military sale, and you're going to send weapon system X to country Y. You have essentially gone through all of your requirements, and then when you send

it to Congress, it means that you are ready to go and you're just giving Congress their right to comment. So once we would send a notice something like the terrorism list, on change to the terrorism list, adding a country or subtracting a country, we would have completely done our homework and completely been prepared such that, in effect, the notice to Congress becomes the effective period, the effective date that we're dealing with. Now I think that's important to understand, because when you look at the terrorism list, the terrorism list is essentially a set of restrictions on the US government. For example, the US government is not permitted by the statute, the terrorism list statute - the U.S. government is not permitted to provide or to sell to a country on the list any military equipment. Now there might be many other reasons you would not sell military equipment to a country on the list, but the statute makes clear, if a country is on the list, you cannot sell them military equipment.

Another issue is, if a country is on the list, you will not, for example, vote in favor of an international financial institution loan to that country. So these are a set of restrictions on the US. That's what the terrorism list is. So when we provide a notice to Congress, it means that we believe that the country fulfills all the objectives. So I would say the day we provide the notice is the most important day.

QUESTION: Did you talk to the North Koreans about that? Is there an understanding?

A/S HILL: Again, we have explained to them what these procedures are. But we have still to go through with them what their statutory requirements are in terms of affirming no connections with terrorists, with terrorist groups and that sort of thing. And we plan to do that very soon, probably through what we call the New York channel. We will probably have some State Department lawyers do this, because again it's a legal matter in US law.

QUESTION: Mukai from Asahi Newspaper Company. Disablement: removal of the fuel rods is included; this is beyond the '94 framework agreement - you have said that, but the removal of fuel rods was also included in that '94 framework, so when you say "beyond the '94 framework," what are the measures actually that go beyond that framework agreement?

A/S HILL: We've agreed on several measures that would make the reprocessing facility unusable, and again, it's technical things. It's cutting chains; it's taking apart equipment; things like that. I'm not in a position to stand here and give you precisely what they are, but in the opinion of our experts, they make it unusable, and unusable for a period of a year, even if you wanted to reverse it. We've also taken some measures in the other two facilities, the reactor and the fuel fabrication plant, again cutting chains, this sort of thing. The removing the fuel rods is important, although you correctly point out it's not

unprecedented, because what we want to do is as you remove the fuel from the reactor, we want a situation where they have nothing to put back into the reactor, and that has to do with the so-called fresh fuel rods, and we have an agreement. There are some details to be worked out, but we have an agreement which would mean that they cannot put back any fresh fuel rods, so this is important because whereas in 2002 when they restarted the facilities, they were able within 60 days to get them going, because they had the fresh fuel rods available, and what we would be doing is making sure they don't have those fresh fuel rods available and therefore cannot restart the reactor, even if that were the only step that we're taking, but I want to emphasize it's not the only one.

I think what we want to do in terms of the actual measures that we take, is that we have there about 10 of them, and what we would like to do is get going on them, get through them, see whether there are some additional ones, see whether there are some of those that we might not feel are worth doing, but what we want to do is once we go through these - and by the way, as I said earlier, we will welcome other participants from other six-party countries to participate on this - once we are done with this, then I think that's an appropriate time to explain precisely what has been done and why it was done and how much disabling it contributes to.

Now I would like to make one other point, which is that if we are in the position where everything has fallen apart and the DPRK starts trying to reconstitute the nuclear facilities again, whether it takes them 12 months, 14 months, 16 months, or even 24 months, we've got a big problem. So we don't think we should get too hung up on the question of whether it's 12 or 14. That would be a huge problem. What we're trying to do is make sure we have a disabling so that that disabling will be overtaken by events, events that are scheduled for '08, when we would go to dismantling and importantly abandonment of the separated plutonium. So I think disabling is a necessary step, without which we can't go further, but we can't stop at disabling.

MODERATOR: Ambassador Hill is Assistant Secretary in charge of East Asia and not specifically the DPRK, but is there any question related to that?

A/S HILL: There's more to East Asia than the DPRK? (laughter)

QUESTION: Aiko Doden from NHK. In your region of responsibility, Myanmar remains a politically and diplomatically challenging issue. In light of the situation where neither soft-line policy nor hard-line policy seems to have brought about any change, would providing any incremental incentives to Myanmar be an option for the US?

A/S HILL: You know, I think I'd be careful of trying to put together incentives at this point for Burma. I mean, we have a government there that has just engaged in one of the

most horrendous crackdowns on dissent that we've seen in several years, and I think to respond to this terrible crackdown by coming up with incentives, I think, would send the wrong message indeed. I think this is a time when we all need to be a little firm and most importantly united. I think we need to make sure that all countries first of all analyze the conditions on the ground in the way we do, and to try to work in a broad diplomatic strategy so that when Burma gets pressure from ASEAN, they don't go run to China because they'll get the same pressure from China, and if they get the pressure from China, they won't go run to India or some other country. So I think what's very important is, we need to create a diplomatic strategy where we can try to get all countries to understand that the situation in Burma is not only intolerable for the Burmese people, but it's intolerable for the region.

And you know, I'm a pragmatist in foreign policy, and frankly I'm proud of that. I've been in this game for 30 years, and part of pragmatism is, you don't start setting up incentives for governments that have just behaved in the way they have, because they will immediately misread it, and they will see it as a sign; they will see these incentives as a sign of weakness. So I think this is not the time to be reaching around and looking for new strategies. It's a time for a little patience, but most of all for a lot of resolve. It's a time to see diplomatic opportunities. I believe that given this horrendous crackdown, this loss of life, the terrible spectacle of a Japanese journalist being shot to death on the street in front of us all - I mean a spectacle that should haunt all of us for the rest of our lives - this is a time when we need to be a little tough-minded and understand that we can, with diplomacy, get one strategy so that there is no sense among the Burmese junta that they can run off and hide behind some country and avoid the reckoning with the rest of the world. So we're going to support the Gambari Plan, Mr. Gambari's approach. We're going to make sure that as he goes forward that China supports him, India supports him, ASEAN, US, Japan - everybody supports him. And let's use this as an opportunity to come together, be unified and have a lot of resolve, and let's get through this. And we will.

QUESTION: Dejima of Nikkei Newspaper. Under Ambassador Kelly, CVID was one of the phrases used. Disablement: you said that it means for at least one year they cannot resume the activity. Why this one-year benchmark? What's the reason behind it? And if, assuming that they resume within one year, how will you try to once again terminate their activities? One point I wish to confirm on the previous comments you made: '08 process, or you have been saying the plan for '08, or eight year; can you elaborate on that?

A/S HILL: Yeah. First of all, when I talk about disablement, as I tried to suggest to the last question, this is an intermediate process, disablement. We want to move to dismantlement, and we would like the measures we've taken to disable turned into

measures to dismantle. Now for example, a disabling measure might be, you take a piece of equipment out and you put it somewhere so it's hard to put back in. Dismantlement would be, you take the piece of equipment, and it's impossible to put back in, and you can't find a substitute piece of equipment. So that would be taking a disabling measure and going to dismantlement. So the D in CVID is dismantlement. And we want to get going on that. The I is, of course, irreversible. And so we want to make sure that as we dismantle, they don't feel that they can reverse the dismantlement. So you take some piece of equipment out; you destroy it; you make sure there's no substitute for it; and that creates a sense of irreversible.

So then the V, of course, is verifiable. Of course it has to be verified. This is not a game of "trust me." I mean, this is not a game where they pretend to disable or dismantle and we pretend to believe them. We need for this to be verifiable. And finally, of course it needs to be complete. I mean, what's the point of stopping a plutonium program if you might have a uranium enrichment facility? So that's why we have to go after that issue too. So why we have done this on a step-by-step basis has to do with how you negotiate this. Believe me, I would love for this all to be done in one day. I would love to sit down, you know, in the six parties, and everyone agrees, "Well, let's just get this over today." I would love for it to be done in one day. It's not, because there are a lot of factors: cultural, you name it. There are a bunch of reasons that the North Koreans don't want to just give up these weapons in a day. So what we have to do is a step-by-step process.

You know, believe me, as that question about Burma suggested, there are other problems in the world I'd like to be working on as well, because I feel very strongly about those problems. But we've got to get through this, and I think the best way to do it is step-by-step, but I don't want these steps to be endless, so we have these timeframes, and we made December 31. It's a bit arbitrary, you know. We could have said December 30 or January 2 or something. But we made that there, and then we're trying to get through the final stage in '08. Now I'd like to see us get it through in the current US administration, because I think if - we started this process; I'd like to see us finish it. And that's our time schedule. So, you know, CVID is all there. Sometimes it's not - you know, you have to ask yourself the question, "Does repeating CVID help the situation? Does it help to keep repeating the same term?" Maybe it does; maybe it doesn't, but I'm just trying to get through this. I'm trying to get through it as pragmatically - and, by the way, as quickly as possible.