

Archive

North Korea Says No Talks With Rice, US

October 28, 2009 04:13 AM

Just days before U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is due to arrive in the South Korean capital, North Korea says it will not rejoin nuclear talks unless she apologizes for comments she made several weeks ago.

North Korea called Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice "reckless" and "bereft of political logic" Wednesday. Ms. Rice is on a tour of Asia, which includes a stop in Seoul on Saturday.

North Korea's official news agency quotes a government spokesman who demands that Ms. Rice retract her description of North Korea as an "outpost of tyranny."

Secretary Rice is working with regional partners China, South Korea, Russia and Japan to persuade North Korea to return to nuclear talks. The five nations hope to convince Pyongyang to live up to international agreements to remain free of nuclear weapons.

However, Pyongyang says Ms. Rice's failure to apologize for her remark, made several weeks ago, demonstrates Washington is not ready to negotiate.

Professor Nam Sung-Wook specializes in North Korea at Korea University here in Seoul. He says he is not surprised by North Korea's comments.

Professor Nam says the statements from Pyongyang are consistent with North Korea's long-held position that the United States has a hostile attitude toward it.

Pyongyang says it requires a nuclear deterrent to counter that hostility.

Secretary Rice and other U.S. officials have repeatedly asserted that Washington has no intention of attacking North Korea.

North Korea also has expressed anger at military exercises the United States is holding with South Korean forces. Pyongyang this week said the annual training, which begins Saturday, is preparation for an invasion of the North and shows the United States is not serious about peacefully resolving the nuclear issue.

The United States has maintained military bases in South Korea since the end of the Korean War in 1953, and now has about 30,000 troops in the country. Washington was Seoul's ally in the war, which ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty.

North Korea has on numerous occasions ruled out returning to the six-party talks, then hinted it may return after all. This week, the chief U.S. delegate to the talks, Christopher Hill, said Washington needs to see progress in the six-party process, or it may need to seek other ways of dealing with the North Korean nuclear issue. He did not elaborate on what other methods might be used.

RELATED STORIES

Archive

Rice in India to Start Asia Trip

U.S. Secretary of State is in India for the start of a six-nation tour of Asia. Her New Delhi talks with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh are expected to focus on India and Pakistan's relations. Ms. Rice says those nations' strong ties with the United States have helped them ease tensions with each other. After her talks in New Delhi, Ms. Rice heads to Pakistan and Afghanistan before traveling to Japan, South Korea and China. She says that...

Archive

Analysts Assess Prospects for North Korean Nuclear Talks

The international community is united in the belief that North Korea should rejoin the six-party talks on its nuclear weapons program.

But the unity is not complete, as Pyongyang announced last month that it would no longer be involved in the talks. At a recent meeting in Washington, officials and analysts from the United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Russia discussed the best way to get North Korea (DPRK) back to the negotiations. One month after...

Archive

US May Consider Options To Stop North Korea's Nuclear Program if Talks Fail

A key U.S. official is warning North Korea that the United States may seek other ways to halt Pyongyang's nuclear program if there is no progress in negotiations toward that end. The top U.S. negotiator to the talks, Ambassador Christopher Hill, made his comments on Capitol Hill Tuesday. Ambassador Hill called on China, as host of the six-party talks, to do more to get North Korea to return to the negotiating table. "As yet, the Chinese have not yet been able to...

Archive

Secretary Rice in Tokyo For Talks

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is in Tokyo to discuss restarting nuclear talks with North Korea and lifting a Japanese ban on American beef. Ms. Rice plans to meet with top officials, including Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, for talks expected to focus on how to bring Pyongyang back to the negotiating table. North Korea has said it will not return to the six-party talks until Secretary Rice apologizes for calling it "an outpost of tyranny..."