

Russia Urges North Korea to Help Enable New International Talks

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Russia has urged North Korea to help pave the way for a resumption of international talks and told Pyongyang that ending the standoff over its nuclear program would bring economic benefits.

North Korean First Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye-Gwan met separately in Moscow with two Russian deputy foreign ministers, Vladimir Titov and Igor Morgulov, the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

Russia "underscored the need for joint efforts aimed at easing tension and creating the conditions for the swift resumption of six-party talks on the basis of principles agreed on in the declaration of Sept. 19, 2005," it said in a statement Thursday.

That referred to a 2005 aid-for-denuclearization deal that Russia, the United States and other nations say Pyongyang violated by conducting a nuclear test in 2006 and pursuing a uranium

enrichment program that would give it a second path to a nuclear weapon, in addition to its plutonium-based program.

Six-party talks involving the two Koreas, the United States, Japan, Russia and China, collapsed in 2008 when the North walked away from the deal. In Beijing last month, Kim repeated an offer for a resumption of the talks, according to Chinese officials. Neither Kim nor the Russia diplomats spoke publicly on Thursday.

The Russian statement about creating conditions for the resumption of the six-party talks seemed to echo U.S. statements that any talks must involve action by the North to show that it is moving toward disarmament.

The call for efforts to ease tension signaled that if North Korea wants talks, it must refrain from actions such as nuclear tests and missile launches that have violated UN Security Council resolutions.

Russia also held out a carrot. The diplomats told Kim that "normalizing the situation on the peninsula" would enable Russia and North Korea to step up economic ties and "begin implementation of large-scale international economic projects," the ministry said.

That may have referred in part to a long-discussed pipeline to supply Russian natural gas to South Korea via North Korea, which experts say is highly unlikely to proceed anytime soon because of tension between North and South Korea.

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