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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Presidential Telephone Call with South Korean
President Kim Young Sam

PARTICIPANTS: The President

Kim Young Sam
President of South Korea

Daniel Poneman, Stanley Roth
Notetakers

DATE, TIME July 14, 1994, 7:01 - 7:23 p.m. EST
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

President Kim: Hello. How are you, President Clinton?

The President: I'm fine. It's nice to hear your voice. I wanted to stay in touch with your thinking on North Korea. I was very pleased that our governments worked so closely together in preparing for the third round of talks. The one day of talks we had before Kim Il Sung's death was announced went rather well, as Bob Gallucci has told your people in Geneva.

Of course now we are all watchfully waiting to hear more from North Korea. We respect your caution in response to events in Pyongyang and support Foreign Minister Han's statement regarding continued dialogue with North Korea and the resumption of US-North Korean talks to resolve the nuclear issue.

We think it's very important for us to go forward with the resumption of the third round as soon as possible. For one thing, it won't be long before something needs to be done to the spent fuel for safety reasons.

For another, since we do not know what will happen in North Korea, it's in our interest to try as soon as possible to reach a broad and thorough settlement that would make their freeze permanent and draw them back into compliance with their nonproliferation commitments.

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One last point I wanted to make: the North Koreans made very clear in the brief third round meeting the great value they attach to acquiring a light water reactor. I think we should try to address that issue squarely. Ambassador Gallucci has had good conversations with your representatives on that, and will be following up with them shortly.

That concludes what I wanted to say and I hoped you would tell me your views on North Korea and how you evaluate the situation, and the prospects for the North-South dialogue.

President Kim: Thank you very much, Mr. President. I'm pleased to hear your voice. I'd like to congratulate your successful completion of the G-7 meeting and also your tour of Europe. At the same time, I would like to extend words of condolence for the floods and victims in Georgia and Florida.

I want to thank you for the briefing you provided me on your talks with North Korea. There is a lot of uncertainty in the situation in North Korea, but it seems to be clear to me that Kim Jong Il is going to succeed Kim Il Sung. I also note that there is no problem whatsoever in the close cooperation between ROK and U.S. military forces.

One thing I can think about is that before the death of Kim Il Sung, we were supposed to have a North-South summit meeting scheduled for the 25th. I regret that this has been put off due to the death of Kim Il Sung. North Korea notified us by document that the summit was postponed, saying that notice was made by delegation of authority. I believe that authority must be Kim Jong Il. I interpret that to mean North Korea is still interested in having a summit, but they are telling us they have to put it off. It is difficult to predict when this summit will take place. We will wait to hear from the North Koreans. I also think South-North dialogue is very important, as important as US-North Korea talks.

As you explained about the US-North Korea talks, these talks are very important to peace on the Korean Peninsula. My judgment is that North Korea continues to be interested in having a summit and of course there is no change in our basic position and I made an announcement to that effect. We will maintain that position which I think we have to keep for the sake of peace on the Korean Peninsula. As you pointed out, it is very important for our two countries, South Korea and the United States, to maintain full consultation concerning the North-South summit and US-North Korea talks. And I believe this is a time for even closer consultation between us.

I'd like to also clarify some misinformation reported by the media. Some media reported that North Korea informed China of Kim Il Sung's death. That is not true. They did not tell anybody until they made the announcement. There is also a report that Jiang Zemin [Chinese President] invited Kim Jong Il to China. That is also not true.

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The new Japanese Prime Minister Murayama, whom you met at the G-7 conference, will pay an official visit to Korea next week and be accompanied by his Foreign Minister Kono. When they come, I would like to discuss fully with them the matters of the North Korean nuclear program, the nuclear issue, and the North-South summit.

Mr. President, one thing that is important in my view is that with the passing of Kim Il Sung, one generation has passed in North Korea. Nothing is normal in North Korea today, although the military maintains its position. Other than that, factories and everything else are not working; operations are suspended. Therefore, I believe we should not be impatient, but we should be prudent in dealing with the issues of US-North Korean talks and a summit in a mature manner. And again close cooperation between the United States and Korea is important.

President Kim: I'm satisfied with the cooperation between Korea and the United States with regard to preparations for the North-South summit scheduled for July 25. I also hope we will continue our close cooperation in the future.

The President: I assure you we will. That is what has led us to the point we are at now. I'm glad you will see Prime Minister Murayama. I had a good meeting with him. He assured me he will maintain Japan's present policy. I think you will have a good meeting with him. Thank you very much. Please give my best to Mrs. Kim.

President Kim: Please convey my best wishes to Mrs. Clinton. Thank you very much.

The President: Good night.

President Kim: Good night.

-- End of Conversation --

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