

As North and South Korea Reciprocate Offers of Talks, Trump Responds: “I Too Have a Nuclear Button”

While the U.S. has been cold toward Kim Jong Un's offer of Olympics talks with South Korea, Seoul has extended the hand of full-fledged diplomacy.

By [Telesur](#)

Global Research, January 03, 2018
[teleSUR](#) 2 January 2018

Region: [Asia](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [NORTH KOREA](#), [Nuclear War](#)

*South Korea has responded to North Korean leader **Kim Jong-un**'s diplomatic overture with an offer Tuesday to hold high-level talks between the countries on the border next week.*

On New Year's Day, North Korea's Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un announced that the country will seek participation in the 2018 Winter Olympics to be held in South Korea between Feb. 9-25, foretelling 2018 as a “year of reconciliation” even as he noted that he now had a “nuclear button” on his desk, referring to the country's now-powerful nuclear deterrence and weapons delivery system.

In a Twitter message posted Tuesday night, U.S. **President Donald Trump**, referring to Kim, said:

“Will someone from his depleted and food starved regime please inform him that I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my Button works!”

The former reality television personality regularly pokes fun at his North Korean counterpart on Twitter, issuing various missives that have worried U.S. commentators due to their inflammatory and non-diplomatic nature. Kim has refused to back down, calling Trump a “mentally deranged U.S. dotard.”

South Korean **President Moon Jae-in**, however, welcomed Kim's New Year address and asked his government to move as quickly as possible to bring North Korea to the Olympics, but he stressed that an improvement in inter-Korean relations “cannot go separately with resolving North Korea's nuclear program.”

South Korea's Unification **Minister Cho Myong-gyon** said the offer for high-level talks next Tuesday had been discussed with the United States. U.S. State Department spokeswoman **Heather Nauert** said she was not aware if the matter had been discussed in advance of the South Korean response.

Cho suggested the talks be held at the truce village of Panmunjeom in the De-Militarized

Zone on Jan. 9, and said they should be focused on North Korea's participation at the Olympics, but other issues would likely arise, including the denuclearization of North Korea.

"I repeat: The government is open to talking with North Korea, regardless of time, location and form," Cho said.

Should the talks be held, it would be the first such dialogue since a vice-ministerial meeting in December 2015.

Moon Jae-In has long been an advocate of the so-called "Sunshine Policy" introduced in 1998 by South Korea's then-**President Kim Dae-Jung** called for a slow process of confederated reunification and resulted in a blossoming of North-South relations, including large shipments of food aid to the North and a lifting of restrictions on joint business ventures.

The South Korean leader, who eventually earned a Nobel Peace Prize, even urged the U.S. to lift its embargo on the North. Pyongyang had, for the first time, established official ties with various European states while holding talks with the U.S. and Japan.

The policy broke down amid threats by the United States, whose then-**President George W. Bush** said that Pyongyang was a part of the "Axis of Evil" including Iraq and Iran.

The White House is lukewarm to the idea of the two Koreas holding talks, responding with a mixture of doubt and the usual sarcasm that has marked Trump's attitude toward to diplomacy.

"Our policy on North Korea hasn't changed at all. The United States is committed and will still continue to put maximum pressure on North Korea to change and make sure that it denuclearizes the peninsula," said White House **Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders**. "Our goals are the same and we share that with South Korea, but our policy and our process has not changed."

The State Department's Nauert couldn't help but express misgivings about potential talks, saying that North Korea might be "trying to drive a wedge of some sort" between the United States and South Korea and added that while it was up to Seoul to decide who it talked to:

"We are very skeptical of Kim Jong Un's sincerity in sitting down and having talks."

China, which has consistently expressed hopes that diplomacy be used to ease tensions, said the positive comments from the Koreans was a good thing.

"China welcomes and supports North Korea and South Korea taking earnest efforts to treat this as an opportunity to improve mutual relations, promote the alleviation of the situation on the Korean peninsula and realize denuclearization on the peninsula," Foreign Ministry spokesman **Geng Shuang** said.

Since the end of the Second World War and the creation of the Republic of Korea under the supervision of the U.S. postwar occupation, Seoul has been a crucial linchpin of the U.S. Asia-Pacific security infrastructure.

*

Featured image is from Global Balita.

The original source of this article is [teleSUR](#)

Copyright © [Telesur](#), [teleSUR](#), 2018

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: **[Telesur](#)**

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca