

"No Way": North Korea Says Will Not Disarm Without Trust In US

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**United Nations, United States:** North Korea's foreign minister on Saturday told the United Nations there was "no way" that his country would disarm first as long as the United States continued to push for tough enforcement of sanctions against Pyongyang.

Addressing the United Nations General Assembly, Ri Yong Ho accused Washington of creating a deadlock in talks on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

"The recent deadlock is because the US relies on coercive measures which are lethal to trust-building," Ri told the assembly.

"Without any trust in the US, there will be no confidence in our national security and under such circumstances, there is no way we will unilaterally disarm ourselves first."

The United States is insisting on a "denuclearization-first" policy that "increases the level of pressure by sanctions to achieve their purpose in a coercive manner," said the foreign minister.

"The perception that sanctions can bring us on our knees is a pipe dream of the people who are ignorant about us."

Led by the United States, the UN Security Council adopted three sanctions resolutions last year aimed at depriving North Korea of revenue for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

A landmark summit between US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong

Un in June led to a warming of ties and a halt in Pyongyang's missile launches, but there has been little concrete progress since.

While in New York, Ri met with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who agreed to return to Pyongyang next month to discuss US demands that the North scrap its weapons programs.

Pompeo will also try to arrange a second summit between Trump and Kim, whose June meeting in Singapore was the first ever between sitting leaders of the long-time enemy states.

### **Russia, China want sanctions relief**

The North Korean foreign minister told the UN assembly that his government had stopped nuclear and missile tests, dismantled a nuclear test site and continued to make efforts to build trust.

"However we do not see any corresponding response from the US," he said.

North Korea's complaints have gotten a sympathetic ear from Russia and China, which this week called for an easing of sanctions to encourage Pyongyang to make concessions.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said the "positive developments" in relations between North and South Korea -- combined with warmer US-North Korean ties -- should lead to sanctions relief.

The United States however has pushed for full enforcement of the tough measures that include a cap on oil and fuel deliveries, a ban on exports of North Korea's raw commodities and an end to contracts for its workers abroad.

China is Pyongyang's top trading partner, while Russia has welcomed tens of thousands of North Korean laborers that provide a vital source of hard currency. Human rights groups say the laborers often work in slave-like conditions.

The United States is also hearing calls for step-by-step sanctions relief from ally South Korea, whose left-leaning President Moon Jae-in helped arrange Trump's diplomatic drive.

That view is not shared by Japan, which wants complete and verified disarming of North Korea as a condition for lifting any sanctions.

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