

Daily Press Briefing: Discussion of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

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August 14, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: Secretary Kerry in his speech of policy address yesterday, he called for immediate shutdown of all gulags in North Korea. And I'm wondering if this – this is a routine reiteration of principles, or if this is a --

MS. HARF: It is. It's a – I mean, we've spoken about this issue for quite a long time.

QUESTION: This is not a broader – part of broader strategy to increase pressure on North Korea?

MS. HARF: Well, I think it can be both. It's a routine policy. Look, we've made clear for a very long time our concerns about the very serious human rights situation in North Korea. But it is – I mean, when the Secretary of State says it, it carries additional weight. So obviously, this is part of our effort to help put pressure on North Korea to change.

QUESTION: Okay, my second question --

MS. HARF: Yes.

QUESTION: -- is: North Korea again fired some short-range rockets --

MS. HARF: Yes.

QUESTION: -- this time shortly before the arrival of Pope Francis. Do you have any comment?

MS. HARF: Well, I don't want to speculate on their motivations. Certainly we remain fully committed to the defense of South Korea, are aware that there are reports that they fired multiple short-range projectiles today – we don't have confirmation yet of what those actually are – continue to call on North Korea to refrain from undertaking such provocative actions, and also would note with concern that they did not – that they failed, once again, to give prior notification to merchant ships, fishing vessels, passenger cargo aircraft in the vicinity despite international procedures to do so.

Anything else?

QUESTION: Yes. On the short-range – was this in violation of sanctions, or is that still under review?

MS. HARF: That's still being determined. So how this process works – and we've seen it play out a couple times over the past few months – is we see these projectiles being launched. It takes us a little while to do an assessment of it, to determine what kind, how – what the range is, to see

if it indeed does fall under UN Security Council resolutions. The past couple few have, but we'll wait to see in this case.

August 13, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: -- on Kenneth Bae, do you have any update on access to him?

MS. HARF: Let me see what I --

QUESTION: There's a report that there's been new consular access.

MS. HARF: I can check on that. Let me see what the latest is. Hold on, let me just pull this up.

They most recently -- they've met -- Swedish representatives have met with him 12 times since his detention, most recently on August 11th, 2014 in a labor camp. The Department spoke with his family that same day.

QUESTION: Any update on his condition?

MS. HARF: No update on his condition.

August 4, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: Oh, yeah. On North Korea, the possibility of the North Korea using biological weapons – does the State Department have any report on that? Because of last week reported by State Department on this. You have more detail on that?

MS. PSAKI: Can you repeat your question? Or what was your – I'm sorry.

QUESTION: Possibility of North Korea using biological weapons, more than that, nuclear weapons, but they're more wanting to – North Korea using biological weapons.

MS. PSAKI: Well, I think we've expressed and have continuously expressed our concern about not only the threats from North Korea, but the recent set of missile launches by North Korea. This is an issue we've referred to the UN and continue to be engaged with discussions with them. I'm not aware of a new concern that's –

QUESTION: Can you take the question about these issues, they're using biological weapons instead of nuclear weapons?

MS. PSAKI: Sure. I'm not aware of that specifically, but I will see if there's more to say.

QUESTION: Yeah, I have another question.

MS. PSAKI: Okay.

QUESTION: North Korea is – continue threatening United States and South Korea with their missiles or nuclear weapons.

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: What is your – United States reaction on – to do right away?

MS. PSAKI: Well, we would, once again, urge North Korea to refrain from taking provocative actions, and instead fulfill its international obligations and commitments. We remain steadfast in our commitment to the defense of our allies, including – and we will continue to coordinate closely with South Korea. As you know, we've spoken out in the past about how such provocative actions continue to heighten tensions in the regions and our concern about that.

QUESTION: But UN remain the sanctions, it does not work North Korea. But do you have a new action to do?

MS. PSAKI: Again, I think these actions have been referred to the UN, and I would refer you to them if there's more to say.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MS. PSAKI: Uh-huh.

QUESTION: Secretary Kerry will be traveling to Burma this weekend for ASEAN meetings.

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: Do you think the Secretary will be willing to meet with his North Korean counterpart if North Korea asks for such a meeting --

MS. PSAKI: No, there's no --

QUESTION: -- bilaterally?

MS. PSAKI: There's no plan for that, nor do I anticipate that's something that would take place.

July 31, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: Kenneth Bae had an interview in which he said he feels that the U.S. Government has abandoned him. Assuming that his comments have been relayed accurately, what's your response? Has he been abandoned?

MS. HARF: Well, no. Just a couple updates. We are in regular contact with Mr. Bae's family. We last spoke with his family yesterday, on July 20th,[1] and we are of course very concerned about his health. We have urged the D.P.R.K. authorities to grant him special amnesty and immediate release on humanitarian grounds. And look, I would just take with a grain of salt things people say in videos when they are being held by a country like North Korea.

QUESTION: Sure. Do you have any updates on any of the other two American detainees?

MS. HARF: I don't have any updates on that for you.

QUESTION: And then, Glyn Davies and Bob King were on the Hill yesterday. They faced a lot of frustrated questions from Congress about the lack of fruit that's been yielded by current U.S. North Korea policy. Do you have – is there any talk about perhaps shifting toward a more pro-engagement stance with North Korea?

MS. HARF: Not that I've heard. Not that I've heard. I'm happy to check with them and see if there's anything to add to what they said on the Hill.

QUESTION: Do you think that the time might be right, though, given that there's – you have Japan potentially making progress with North Korea on a bilateral human rights issue, you have a North Korea – a South Korean – excuse me – president who is sort of running out of time to make some tangible progress on North Korea. You have China increasingly very frustrated with the lack of traction it's gotten in its attempts to restart talks. And then you have a rising chorus domestically saying that there's been no progress with U.S. policy toward North Korea.

MS. HARF: No, it's not an unfair question or an easy one to answer, I think, but let me talk to our folks and – I just don't have all the granularity here. Let me see if we can get you something.

QUESTION: Thanks.

QUESTION: Well, a follow-up question about Kenneth Bae. When the – when was the last time Kenneth Bae's families met in – at North Korea?

MS. HARF: Well, I know that Swedish Embassy representatives have met with him 11 times since his detention, most recently on April 18th – the Swedish.

QUESTION: So since after April 18, hasn't met any --

MS. HARF: Not to my knowledge, no.

QUESTION: So they rejected the meeting or what?

MS. HARF: I don't have details on that for you.

QUESTION: All right, thank you.

July 21, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: Okay, thank you. Secretary Kerry has said in one of the interviews yesterday that North Korea has been more quiet since his visit to China last year. Do you think this is a correct assessment of the situation, when North Korea has fired a number of missiles, rockets, and --

MS. HARF: Well, I think the Secretary – and we all have been very clear in condemning North Korea’s aggressive actions when they occur. We’ve talked recently about ballistic missiles and how those were in violation of UN Security Council resolutions. So I think the Secretary’s been very clear about our concern with North Korea’s activities.

QUESTION: But he said North Korea has been a lot more quiet than --

MS. HARF: Well, again he wasn’t trying to convey something different than we’ve conveyed in the past.

QUESTION: Just a quick one, Marie, on Anders Dale, the Norwegian that the State Department added to the Foreign Terrorist Watch List.

MS. HARF: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: Do you think he’s related to the travel – international travel warnings that we’re seeing today about --

MS. HARF: I don’t have the details. Let me see if I can get them, Lucas.

QUESTION: Two things slightly related. On Friday in The Washington Post a former State Department official who worked in DRL on internet freedom wrote a piece saying – warning Americans that surveillance of them – of U.S. citizens – is not just limited to the new NSA stuff but goes back to this executive order that was signed some years ago. I’m wondering if you have any comment on that.

MS. HARF: Well, I didn’t read the piece. I’m happy to read it after the briefing, but I will say in general that this Administration, starting with the President, has made very clear what we do and what we don’t do when it comes to intelligence gathering and why we do it. And I think I would probably leave it at that. I’m happy to take a look at the article.

QUESTION: Well, this goes beyond just metadata. This goes into actual --

MS. HARF: Well, I said intelligence gathering, writ large, which is --

QUESTION: Oh, no. I understand. But so – please read the – and if you have anything to say about it I will be --

MS. HARF: I'll come back to you tomorrow if I have anything to say.

QUESTION: And then – okay. And then there was an incident over the weekend in Berlin at your Embassy. I don't know if you're aware of it.

MS. HARF: I'm sorry. I'm not.

QUESTION: Okay. Well, some people went into the memorial to the murdered Jews of Europe, which is across the street from the Embassy and projected onto the Embassy wall a picture of the President along with the words "NSA is in the house." I'm wondering if you have any problem with this, given that it was on – it was projected, there was no damage, obviously, but there's --

MS. HARF: Well, I haven't seen it, but I would certainly have a big problem with the sentiment.

QUESTION: Well, it makes for a quite compelling picture.

MS. HARF: Look, when we were in Vienna Secretary Kerry had a very good meeting with Foreign Minister Steinmeier. They spoke to the press after it. Look, they said there's a number of very important things happening in the world right now and they're working very closely together on all of these issues, and when there are bilateral issues that need to be discussed they will, and we are working together in an open and transparent manner. We've committed to that, and I think that the Germans are working very closely with us on a number of issues.

QUESTION: No, but in terms of this specific incident you – other than the fact that you would disagree with the sentiment – is that correct?

MS. HARF: Well, I haven't seen it.

QUESTION: Well, it said "NSA in the house" and it's got --

MS. HARF: I can envision what – let me take a look at it. I'll take that as one of my do-outs for tomorrow's briefing.

QUESTION: Okay. But as far as you know, there wasn't any – there's no like broader – because I'm talking about like security of the Embassy, anything like that.

MS. HARF: I can check.

QUESTION: There's nothing – okay.

MS. HARF: I'm sorry. I'm not familiar with the incident.

QUESTION: Talking about Vienna, you just reminded me about Iran.

MS. HARF: Yes, I know. No Iran. I've been up for an hour and a half – no Iran questions. (Laughter.)

Yes.

QUESTION: Is the Secretary planning to go up on the Hill anytime soon to talk about the extension?

MS. HARF: We are doing a number of Hill engagements, whether it's at staff level, member level, us, the White House, Treasury. I don't have any specifics on the Secretary given his travel. I know he's had conversations and had some meetings over the past few weeks. I can attempt to get you some more details for tomorrow.

QUESTION: Okay.

MS. HARF: But we are doing a number of engagements with the Hill to explain what the extension is, what it isn't, why we think it's important to continue these negotiations.

QUESTION: And I realize it's only a couple of days since you guys came back – probably less than 24 hours, in your case.

MS. HARF: Yeah. (Laughter.) Less than 24 hours. Yep.

QUESTION: Is there any idea yet when the next meeting might be held?

MS. HARF: I don't – we don't have those details yet. Obviously, as soon as possible. Hopefully in the next few weeks. I think the meetings over the next few months will look – a combination of experts meetings, bilateral meetings, multilateral meetings – we're still trying to figure out all those details.

QUESTION: Vienna will still be your port of choice?

MS. HARF: I think we're still trying to determine all the details on where we'll be and where all the meetings will happen. Vienna was a very good host for three weeks, but I'm happy to be home.

QUESTION: Okay.

QUESTION: Thank you.

July 18, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: Okay, okay. Earlier this week, North Korea became an observer member of the Asia Pacific group on money laundering. And I think the U.S. is also a member of this anti-money laundering group. Do you have any comment on this?

MS. PSAKI: I don't think I have a particular comment on that. I can give you an update on our engagement with the UN, which I know you've studiously asked the last couple of days. I can confirm that on July 17th, so just yesterday, we participated – the United States participated in UN Security Council consultations on the serious threat posed by North Korea's recent series of ballistic missile launches which were June 2nd, July 9th, July 13th. As the council president reported to the press after the consultations, all members of the Security Council, of course, including the United States, condemned these launches as violations of the Security Council resolutions and urged North Korea to fully comply. In the remarks of our representative, we expressed particular concern with the irresponsible manner in which the launches were conducted, jeopardizing the safety of civilian aircraft and ships, and we will continue to monitor the situation closely and consult with our UN Security Council colleagues.

July 17, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

**Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea/ Japan
Washington, DC**

MS. PSAKI: QUESTION: There was a news report a couple of days ago that Secretary Kerry told his Japanese counterpart, foreign minister, during a phone call last week that the Prime Minister Abe should refrain from going to North Korea because such a trip could undermine trilateral cooperation between U.S., Japan, and Korea in dealing with North Korea's nuclear missile program. Is this report true, and do you have such a concern?

MS. PSAKI: I know there have been a range of reports out there. We've provided a readout. I just don't have any additional readout to share with all of you. I can reiterate that during their call last week they discussed the full range of bilateral and regional issues, as well as cooperation that reflects the global nature of our partnership. The United States, of course, supports Japanese efforts to resolve the abductions issue in a transparent manner. We are close allies and partners. But beyond that, I know there have been a range of reports; I just don't have anything more to add from here.

QUESTION: Do you have any -- yeah. Do you have any updates with -- on the U.S. engagement with the Security Council with regard to North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: To North Korea? No, I do not.

QUESTION: Can I just pursue that? I mean, does the U.S. have a stance or whether it would appropriate for Prime Minister Abe to go to North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have anything more to add on this particular issue --

QUESTION: Quickly, India.

MS. PSAKI: -- and I'm not aware of a particular trip plan they've announced either, so --

QUESTION: India. Five nations that includes Brazil, India, China, Russia, and the South Africa -- they met recently in Brazil and also they announced \$100 billion bank and --

MS. PSAKI: I spoke to this yesterday, Goyal, so I would point you to that. I gave a couple of comments on it.

QUESTION: But my question is actually in this regard, that even Russia is part of this. As far as these sanctions are concerned, how this will affect these five nations have announced unity in fighting against terrorism and also working on unity on economic --

MS. PSAKI: Well, it remains to be seen what the focus of the BRICS Development Bank will be. The BRICS summit has been around long before the issues in Ukraine over the past couple of months. So at this point, many of the important details aren't yet clear, but beyond that, I would point you to what I said yesterday.

July 16, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: Please. The U.S. has joined several other countries in writing to the International Civil Aviation Organization about North Korea's recent missile launches --

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: -- and the threat that those launches might pose to civil aviation. Can you tell us about that?

MS. PSAKI: Sure. On July 8th, so just last week, we cosigned – the United States cosigned a letter to the president of ICAO expressing concern with the serious threat to international aviation posed by North Korea's recent rocket and missile launches. We've talked about them a couple of times but there have been more than a half dozen, and certainly, that's raised concern.

North Korea's decision to conduct these launches without prior notification threatens the safety of international aviation and demonstrates North Korea's disregard for the rules and regulations of the organization, and hence our effort to express our concern from the United States.

...

QUESTION: I asked this question last week but didn't get a clear answer, and North Korea has, you said, fired a number of missiles, rockets and artillery rounds recently. And some of those launches violated UN Security Council resolution --

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: -- including the Scud launches last weekend, another set of ballistic missiles fired this week. North Korea is flouting these UN Security Council resolutions every week and – but it looks like all you do is just expressing concern over and over again. And I'm wondering if the U.S. has any plan to raise this issue at the Security Council, because there's no point of having these kind of resolutions unless violations are properly dealt with.

MS. PSAKI: Well, let me give you a little bit of context. There are times when we have to do a little more work confirming some of the details, so according to our information that North Korea launched two Scud-class short-range ballistic missiles from its southwest region on July 13th. Both missiles flew in a northeasterly direction and impacted the sea, and that was, of course, just a couple of days ago, but as I mentioned, sometimes it takes a little time to confirm specifics. And certainly, we are concerned about the most recent round of ballistic missile launches. These are yet another – this is yet another violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions, and these provocative actions heighten tensions in the region and will not provide

North Korea the prosperity and security it claims to seek. And obviously, the UN Security Council has the lead on deciding next steps here. In terms of our role, I can check on that and see if there's more specifics about our engagement with the UN Security Council.

QUESTION: You're not aware of the council considering any action at this point, though, to --

MS. PSAKI: I have not seen any updates from their end, but certainly, we view these as a clear violation.

QUESTION: Okay. And then on the ICAO thing, I don't know this and I don't know if you know it either --

MS. PSAKI: Okay.

QUESTION: -- but does North Korea have a representative at this organization? It seems to me that writing to the head of ICAO instead of contacting the North Koreans directly would be -- is a bit odd. I mean, I can see writing to both of them. Do you know if there was any contact with the North Koreans directly?

MS. PSAKI: I do not know if North Korea has a representative. We can certainly -- I'll look into that, Matt.

QUESTION: But do you know if the same --

MS. PSAKI: But obviously, they have oversight over --

QUESTION: Right, fair enough.

MS. PSAKI: -- civil aviation issues, so --

QUESTION: But you don't happen to know if that same letter was cc'd to Pyongyang, do you?

MS. PSAKI: I do not have that level of detail. I'm sure we can check on that for you.

July 15, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

**Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC**

QUESTION: Yes. About the missile launch of North Korea. As you know, the – I'm not sure you are aware of this. The top official of the Workers' Party of North Korea told that the Japanese member of the House of the Councillors. This time the missile launch represent the protest against United States and South Korea, particularly this military exercise. Are you aware of this? And what is the position of this?

MS. PSAKI: Well, let me first say that we're concerned by reports that North Korea fired multiple suspected rockets and artillery shells into the sea just one day after yet another reported round of missile launches. I think you've seen it's about a half dozen if not more of these incidents over the course of the past several days. I'd caution anyone from linking the missile launches to the joint military exercises. These annual joint exercises are transparent, defense-oriented. They've been carried out regularly and openly for roughly 40 years now, and these recent missile launches were conducted without warning and are clearly designed to raise tensions. So an effort to link them, in our view, is not appropriate.

QUESTION: So these exercises just annual? You don't have any intention or message to North Korea, actually?

MS. PSAKI: These are, again, exercises that we've been undergoing for 40 years now. They show the strong U.S. commitment to the alliance, and they're done in a transparent manner and I expect they will continue.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MS. PSAKI: Okay.

July 10, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea/China

Washington, DC

QUESTION: Secretary Kerry said in Beijing that he discussed the importance of enforcing sanctions on North Korea, and China has a huge role to play in this regard, and China understands this obligation. Does this mean that China has agreed to carry out those sanctions more vigorously than before?

MS. PSAKI: Well, China has been an important partner in the implementation of sanctions, and even as recently as last year they took a number of important steps. I will leave it to them to announce whether there are additional steps that they plan on taking. But I think the Secretary was just referring to the important role they play and the relationship that they have with North Korea.

July 9, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: So it launched two missiles last night again. So how does the U.S. analyze the purpose of it and intention on why they chose this timing?

MS. PSAKI: The United States is concerned by reports of yet another round of North Korean launches, the fourth in less than two weeks. As we have emphasized, such provocative actions unilaterally heighten tensions in the region, and they will not provide North Korea with the prosperity and security it claims to seek. We once again note with concern North Korea's apparent failure to provide prior notification to merchant ships, fishing vessels, and passenger and cargo aircraft in the vicinity, despite international provisions to do so. And we once again urge North Korea to refrain from taking provocative actions, and instead fulfill its international obligations and commitment.

QUESTION: A follow-up question?

MS. PSAKI: Sure.

QUESTION: Yeah. Pentagon has just confirmed that these missiles were Scud ballistic missiles and this launch is a violation of a number of UN Security Council resolutions. Do you have any plan to take action against the North at the Security Council? Thank you.

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any confirmation of those specific details or reports when I came down here. I can circle back with our team. Obviously, we take any violation seriously and have in the past certainly encouraged the UN Security Council to move forward with steps.

QUESTION: Do you believe Hollywood movies are to blame for the North Korean launch, Scud launches?

MS. PSAKI: I think they've been around long before this – recent Hollywood movies about these issues.

QUESTION: Jen, is it related to the S&ED held in Beijing?

MS. PSAKI: Are the launches related to?

QUESTION: Yeah, yeah.

MS. PSAKI: I can't speculate or make a prediction of what the cause of their launches are. As you know, this is the fourth in less than two weeks, and so it's merely provocative actions that

they're taking from their end. Certainly, we're concerned, as are countries in the region concerned about these steps.

QUESTION: And a follow-up. But the fact that they did choose to fire this missile during this meeting, S&ED, does it affect in any way the U.S. and China interacting in Beijing?

MS. PSAKI: Well, the – certainly, North Korea and the threat from North Korea is a part of the agenda at the S&ED and has long been planned to be a part of the agenda. And I know that they discussed and will continue to discuss these issues over the next remaining day of the meetings there.

QUESTION: What is the U.S. view --

MS. PSAKI: Go ahead.

QUESTION: What is the U.S. view on Japanese Government still are going to keep contacting with North Korea on the abduction issue, and they are going to carefully watch the procedure of the discussion?

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm. Well, we have spoken to this a bit in the past, but I'm happy to reiterate what our statements have been on this.

We continue to support Japanese efforts to resolve the abductions issues in a transparent manner. We are closely coordinating with our allies and partners, including Japan, taking – in an effort to take appropriate measures to address the threat to global security posed by North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs, but would refer you to the Government of Japan for any additional information about these discussions.

Go ahead, Scott.

QUESTION: But is it right for the Japanese to include the possibility of unilaterally lifting some of their sanctions as part of these negotiations, given what you have termed these provocative actions by North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: Well, as far as I'm last aware, I don't believe there's been any public announcements in that regard. There have been a range of reports and rumors, but I'm not going to speculate on proposals that haven't been announced.

July 8, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

**Daily Press Briefing, selections on South Korea/China
Washington, DC**

QUESTION: Hi. My question is: You said yesterday that the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula will be one of the key topics for the strategic --

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: -- talks with China. And what kind of specific outcome do you hope to see from the meeting with regard to this issue?

And my second question is: U.S. has been negative about Chinese plan to set up regional development bank AIIB.

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: And do you think this will also come up during the strategic talks? Thank you.

MS. PSAKI: Well, there are a range of topics, certainly, that will be discussed that may or may not be at the top of the agenda. In terms of the AIIB, we believe that there is a need for additional public, private, and multilateral development bank to support infrastructure development. But we also believe any proposal for a new international development financial institution should clearly explain how it will complement and add value to existing institutions. As you know, there's already an existing institution that does some of the same work.

And additionally, we believe that any international institution involved in infrastructure investment and development should incorporate high standards of governance, environmental and social safeguards, procurement, and debt sustainability that have been established over decades of experience at multilateral development banks.

And as you know, there's already the ADB, which plays a critical role in regional infrastructure development, so the AIIB -- excuse me -- hasn't -- doesn't exist yet, and obviously, those are the bar -- that's the bar we believe it should pass.

In terms of North Korea, there's been an ongoing dialogue between the United States and China as well as all of our partners in the Six-Party process about how to best work together to put the necessary pressure on North Korea, but the ball remains in their court to take the necessary steps to abide by their international obligations. But certainly, we expect the threat from North Korea, our concerns about North Korea to be a part of the discussion ongoing on the ground now.

July 2, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

**Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea/Japan
Washington, DC**

QUESTION: Regarding the talk between Japanese Government and North Korea, did the U.S. have any report from Japanese Government? And how does the U.S. think about the possibility of Japanese Government is going to – lifting of the sanctions in North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: Well, we have certainly been in close touch with our Japanese counterparts on this and a range of other issues. Certainly, they are the experts on the discussions that are ongoing. I know there have been many reports about what they may or may not do. We don't have any independent confirmation of that. I don't believe any public announcement has been made. So we would refer you to the Government of Japan for more information. We continue to support Japanese efforts to resolve the abductions issue in a transparent manner.

And as I noted at the top, we of course maintain regular consultations with Japan on issues related to North Korea, security in the region, and a range of issues we have shared concern about.

QUESTION: And what do you think about the possibility of lifting of the Japanese original sanction on North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: Well, again, I'm not going to speak to a hypothetical. There hasn't been any announcement made. Obviously, I don't have any independent information here about that particular report.

...

QUESTION: Sort of as these meetings are happening, North Korea's been sort of demonstrating increased aggressive posturing with this – these small missile tests, and also with the decision earlier this week to charge the two Americans that they currently detain. First of all, do you have any update on the status of those two Americans? Any more on what their health was the last time the Swedes were able to meet with them, or whether they've been – if they've been able to meet with them this week?

MS. PSAKI: Well, there have been no new meetings, so the last meetings by our Swedish protecting power were ones I think we updated on a couple of days ago. That was with Mr. Fowle on June 20th and Mr. Miller on June 21st. It's important to note that those meetings were prior to these reports of the charges. So to my knowledge, there hasn't been an opportunity to discuss this with them specifically by our Swedish protecting power.

In terms of their health, obviously, we're always concerned about the health and welfare and safety of U.S. citizens. That's one of the reasons we seek to have close contacts and have

consular access, but I don't have any specific updates or new concerns to express related to their health.

QUESTION: Do you have any indication why these charges are happening now? Because it seems the one man was in custody since April.

MS. PSAKI: Well, we, again, have seen reports of the charges, but I don't have any separate confirmation or additional details on them at this point in time.

QUESTION: And then also, between that and the missile tests, some experts are coming forward saying that they indicate that North Korea is frustrated by not being sort of more on the U.S.'s radar, more on other countries' radars, that it's not a priority in people's foreign policies. Does that – is that an analysis that this building shares, and is it affecting the way you kind of go forward in your policy towards North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: Well, I think there's a shared concern by the United States, by other countries in the region about the bellicose rhetoric and the threats posed by North Korea. And we're certainly concerned by the reports of yet another round of provocative weapons launches, the third in a week. These launches are intended to unilaterally heighten tensions in the region. They'll not provide North Korea or the North Korean people with the prosperity and security it claims to seek. And it's long been the case that the ball is in North Korea's court to change their relationship with the international community. It's not in ours; it's in their court. But clearly, actions like those of this past week don't help them take steps forward in that regard.

QUESTION: Can I, Jen, just follow up on that? In the case of Mr. Miller, the reports are that he sought asylum in North Korea or he – that he tore up his visa to the country upon entering and said he wanted to stay there. Is it your understanding that he wants to come back here or that he wants – doesn't want to, or do you have any details on that?

MS. PSAKI: I just don't have any more details to share in either of these cases.

QUESTION: But you are still seeking – your official position is that you're seeking him to be returned to the U.S.?

MS. PSAKI: Absolutely, and we're also seeking additional consular visits --

QUESTION: Okay. And then --

MS. PSAKI: -- through our protecting power.

QUESTION: Okay, great. And then one more on the summit: A lot of people are noting that this is the first time a Chinese president has visited the president of South Korea before visiting – paying an official visit to North Korea. Are you encouraged by this as a sign that China is sort of moving away from North Korea and perhaps a little bit more willing to put diplomatic pressure on them?

MS. PSAKI: Well, we've had a range of conversations with China over the course of the last several months or even years, I should say at this point, that we have been here, that the Secretary has been here. And they have played a role in pushing North Korea to take more helpful steps forward. But I don't want to analyze further the order of visits. I'll leave that to others to analyze.

QUESTION: Sure. I guess what I'm trying to get at is: Do you detect a shift in the Chinese position toward a greater willingness to work with you and other partners in the region to put pressure on North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: Well, the Secretary has spoken to this in the past about conversations that he has had with Chinese leaders about the threat we face and the concerns we have about North Korea's rhetoric. But I think that's – I would point to that more than the order of visits.

QUESTION: Okay.

July 1, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea/Japan
Washington, DC

QUESTION: This is actually related more towards Japan and North Korea. They recently wrapped up their talks on the abductions issue in Beijing.

MS. HARF: Yep.

QUESTION: And I wanted to know: To what level has the State Department been communicating with Japan about these discussions in Beijing?

MS. HARF: Well, we've talked to the Japanese about it. We continue to support their efforts to resolve the abductions issue in a transparent manner and closely coordinate with them and our other allies on DPRK generally speaking. I don't have any specifics in terms of how we've talked to them about this.

QUESTION: Does the State Department assess that they've been transparent up to this point?

MS. HARF: I'm happy to check with our folks and see if there's an assessment.

...

QUESTION: Yeah. It is expected that the Japanese Government will lift its bilateral – unilateral sanctions against North Korea as early as Thursday. So --

MS. HARF: Okay. I hadn't heard that. I'm happy to check.

QUESTION: Do you have any concern that it would impact on your efforts to isolate North Korea?

MS. HARF: Well, I think we've been very clear about our – the international community's efforts to isolate North Korea. If you just look at the UN sanctions alone, incredibly biting sanctions on North Korea right now, and ours as well. So I will take a look and see if there's more to share.

QUESTION: So you are – are you confident that the Japanese Government lift up sanctions but not harm the sanction regime?

MS. HARF: Well, I haven't seen that detail, so let me just check and see if there's more to share.

QUESTION: Right.

June 30, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

**Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC**

QUESTION: North Korea says they're going to try the two detained Americans. Have you had any notice on this, and any comment from you?

MS. PSAKI: Sure. Well, we are aware of reports that U.S. citizens Matthew Miller and Jeffrey Fowle will face trial in North Korea. There's no greater priority for us than the welfare and safety of U.S. citizens abroad. Out of humanitarian concern for Mr. Fowle and Mr. Miller and their families, we request North Korea release them so they may return home. We also request North Korea pardon Kenneth Bae and grant him special amnesty and immediate release so he may reunite with his family and seek medical care.

Beyond the reports, Lesley, I don't have any other official independent information, I guess I should say. I can also convey that the embassy of Sweden in North Korea visited Mr. Fowle on June 20th and Mr. Miller on May 9th and June 21st. And the embassy, of course, regularly requests consular access to all U.S. citizens in North Korean custody.

QUESTION: Do you --

QUESTION: Do you know, are they being held in the same place?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any more information on that. I'm happy to check and see if there's more we can provide.

QUESTION: Presumably, because you are now able to give their names, they've signed these privacy waiver things?

MS. PSAKI: They have.

QUESTION: So can you tell us under what circumstances they were both arrested and what charges they might be facing?

MS. PSAKI: There isn't information -- additional information we're going to share. They -- yes, they did sign a Privacy Act waiver, but it doesn't obligate the Department to share all information about each case and each circumstances, especially when it comes to ensuring or taking every step we need to to help return them home.

QUESTION: Wait, wait, wait, wait.

QUESTION: So you cannot give us any indication of the charges they could be facing?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any more information to provide.

QUESTION: Quite apart – this is a new one on me, and I've been – quite apart from this case, are you saying that if someone signs a Privacy Act waiver, if we ask a question, you don't have – you still don't have to answer it?

MS. PSAKI: Well, I think Privacy Act waiver gives us the ability to provide more information, and we do that as often as we possibly can. And there are some cases where it's not in the benefit of the case or the individuals to provide more information.

QUESTION: But you make that decision, not the person?

MS. PSAKI: Well, there are cases – there are processes that we undergo to ensure we can provide as much information as possible, and there are times when it's not appropriate to. This is one of those times.

QUESTION: Well, let's not talk – forget about this case. Just in general, I don't get it. So if I sign a Privacy Act waiver saying I want you to tell the world about my case someplace, and one of my colleagues here asks you a question about it, you can say, "Well, he signed the waiver but we just don't feel like telling you what the information is, so we're not going to?"

MS. PSAKI: That's not exactly how it works, Matt. But --

QUESTION: Well, I don't understand. If I --

MS. PSAKI: -- we provide as much information as we can.

QUESTION: If I – as you can? But if I've authorized you to go out and speak and tell – and say what happened to me and what my condition is and everything, you can still decide to say no, we're not going to --

MS. PSAKI: Well, I think if --

QUESTION: You can say nothing?

MS. PSAKI: -- if you were detained, you would want us to take steps that are in the best interests of your safety and security, wouldn't you?

QUESTION: Well, yeah – if I've signed the waiver saying I want my story to be told, I would expect you to tell my story if I'm – if you were asked about it, not to say – to tell people --

MS. PSAKI: I'm sure you've seen a Privacy Act waiver and what they look like.

QUESTION: I have.

MS. PSAKI: It's not exactly stating that. So we make decisions about what information is appropriate to provide in the best interests of citizens who are detained overseas. And we will --

QUESTION: (Inaudible.)

QUESTION: For that matter, you could say that you're not going to release any information ever, no matter what -- no matter whether the thing -- whether it's signed or not.

MS. PSAKI: I think we try -- make every effort to release as much information as we can.

Go ahead.

QUESTION: So in this case, you can't confirm that they're facing trial? Even if you're not going to tell us what the charges are, you cannot confirm independently that they're facing trial?

MS. PSAKI: I can't. And that's not related to the Privacy Act waiver; that's related to the fact that these are reports. We don't have additional information to provide.

QUESTION: So the Swedish Embassy hasn't been able to convey that information to you, or they haven't been given that information?

MS. PSAKI: I just don't have any more information to provide.

QUESTION: And can you give us an idea of what the Embassy might have told you about their state of health when they saw them on June 20th and 21st?

MS. PSAKI: I don't. I'm happy to check with them and see if there's more to provide. Obviously, we're requesting their release for humanitarian purposes. I will see if there's more on their health that we are able to provide to all of you.

QUESTION: I imagine that you've been in touch with the families of both these men?

MS. PSAKI: We have been over the course of time. I don't have any new timing on that, but I can also check on that question as well.

QUESTION: Did the families make any request of this building to not release certain information about their loved ones, in particular why they chose to go to North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: I'm just not going to be able to provide any more information.

QUESTION: Can you just say in general, because we have these cases coming up every so often involving U.S. citizens -- the U.S. doesn't have diplomatic relations with North Korea. I assume that if I just decided I wanted to go, it would be very difficult for me to go without facing some sort of repercussion. What can be done to dissuade people from trying to go?

MS. PSAKI: Well, we don't track the travel of United States citizens. But obviously, we put Travel Warnings out, Roz --

QUESTION: Yeah, but if I --

MS. PSAKI: -- to make sure people understand the circumstances they're walking into.

QUESTION: But certainly if I'm coming back through Dulles and I'm going through border control, I'm going to get the once-over -- maybe the once-over when they see that I have a visa from D.P.R.K. in my passport. What can be done to dissuade people from going and almost certainly getting themselves into trouble every time an American steps foot on North Korean soil?

MS. PSAKI: Well, that's one of the reasons that we provide regular updates that are available on the State Department website, that we talk about frequently. All of you report about these cases as well. So I would encourage you to continue to do that.

QUESTION: I think one of the -- the older man, if I'm not mistaken, apparently was arrested after people found a Bible in his hotel room. And we all know how the D.P.R.K. feels about Christianity. Is it an unnecessarily provocative act for those who think that they're trying to spread the gospel to try to go to North Korea, knowing that they're running the risk of being arrested, being treated however the North Koreans are able to cover up whatever they do to them, and then expecting the U.S. Government to come to their rescue even though, if you have a blue passport, you expect your government to come save you?

MS. PSAKI: Well, Roz, I think we are focused on the health and safety and well-being of United States citizens wherever they are in the world, and we take every step to ensure they either are returned home or they are safe. We have consular access. You know how we feel about freedom of religion and freedom of -- and being able to express that. But certainly, the reason we provide information about a range of countries is to ensure people know what circumstances they're walking into. And I don't have the North Korea Travel Warning in front of me, but I can assure you that it suggests strongly not to travel at all to North Korea.

Go ahead, Ali.

QUESTION: Well, I had just two quick questions on that. Do you have any more on at what level the communication between the State Department officials and the families of the men who have been detained have been taking place?

MS. PSAKI: I do not. I can take that in the list of questions as well.

QUESTION: Sure. And then in the Travel Warning, there's plenty of caveats about the fact that these travel companies can't provide for safety of individual Americans. But I'm wondering, does this Department take a position on these companies actually doing these tours and seemingly, at times, willfully pulling -- putting American citizens in danger? Do you take a position on the -- just the merits in general of these tours being conducted?

MS. PSAKI: Well, I'm not going to get that specific. But clearly, any tour company or any individual can access the information that we make available about travel and the warnings of travel to North Korea as well as other countries. And so I think that states pretty clearly where we stand about any type of travel.

QUESTION: North Korea.

MS. PSAKI: North Korea? Go ahead.

QUESTION: Yes. North Korea, as you know, has launched the SCUD missile last September – no, no, last Saturday. Sorry. And then Marie – your colleague Marie told us that we are always concerned whenever they launch anything. So what about this time? Do you have some readout, or --

MS. PSAKI: Well, we are aware of reports that North Korea launched two projectiles from its east coast on June 29th, so just yesterday. We're continuing to closely monitor North Korean activities and the situation on the peninsula. We urge North Korea to refrain from taking provocative actions and instead fulfill its international obligations and commitments, but I don't have any further information on the type or specific details of the projectiles launched in this case.

QUESTION: As you know, President Park and Xi Jinping of China is going to meet this week. Does the United States ask something of both China or South Korea to send a message to North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: Well, as two of our vital partners in the Six-Party Talks that we engage with closely on the threat from North Korea, I'm certain – and I would refer you to them, but I would bet that this will be a part of their discussion and we'll continue to engage closely with both China and Japan as it – or, sorry, China and South Korea as it relates to their discussions. And certainly, as you know, we also encourage dialogue and restraint as it relates to relationships in the region as well.

QUESTION: One more thing. Japan will also continue to talk to North Korea about abduction issues after this. Are you consulting with Japan with regard to this timing and with the sanction?

MS. PSAKI: Well, we support Japanese efforts to resolve the abductions issues, and we encourage them to do so in a transparent manner, and we'd refer you to them for more information about their talks.

QUESTION: Can I just stay on North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: Sure.

QUESTION: North Korea this morning proposed that the two Koreas should halt hostile military activities later on this week. This appears to be ahead of the visit by Chinese President

Xi Jinping. What is your reaction to this? Is this something that's welcome or is it just a cynical ploy by Pyongyang to try and have some kind of image of being peace-loving ahead of the visit?

MS. PSAKI: Well, broadly speaking, we certainly support improved inter-Korean relations. But with these specific exercises, these are defense-oriented and they're designed to enhance the ability to respond to any potential contingency that could arise. They're designed to increase readiness to defend South Korea and protect the region, and they occur around the same time every year and are a regular part of what happens in the region. So we've seen these calls before, and we certainly see the value in these exercises and the value in them continuing.

QUESTION: So you're not going to halt the exercises ahead of the visit by Xi Jinping to North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: I would refer you to the Department of Defense, but I'm not aware of any plans to do that.

QUESTION: One more (inaudible). Under Six-Party Talks, does the U.S. have any optimistic plan to resumption of Six-Party Talks future or near – within this year?

MS. PSAKI: Well, again, the – it remains in the ball – the ball remains in North Korea's court to take steps to abide by their international obligations in the 2005 Joint Statement. They haven't shown an indication of their plans to do that, so I don't have any prediction of a resumption.

QUESTION: Thank you.

June 27, 2014

**Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC**

QUESTION: I wanted to know if you can today offer any independent confirmation of the projectiles launched by North Korea.

MS. HARF: We don't have anything new on that, still looking into what those may have been.

QUESTION: Okay.

MS. HARF: Nothing new.

QUESTION: Another issue?

QUESTION: Wait, wait. Stay on North Korea, please. Today, maybe you can try again to comment on --

MS. HARF: Nothing new on the video.

QUESTION: No?

MS. HARF: On the movie.

QUESTION: On the movie?

MS. HARF: Sorry.

QUESTION: Okay.

June 26, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson

**Daily Press Briefing, selections on South Korea/North Korea
Washington, DC**

QUESTION: So the South Korean military today said that North Korea launched four projectiles into the Sea of Japan --

MS. HARF: Yes.

QUESTION: -- today. Does this raise concerns that North Korea's increasing its provocations?

MS. HARF: I think we're always concerned whenever North Korea launches anything. I think that's probably fair to say. And we are aware of, I think, three projectiles. Did you say three or four? I'm sorry.

QUESTION: I believe it's being reported as three.

MS. HARF: Okay, right. So that North Korea launched three projectiles from its southeast coast. We're monitoring the situation, and we're still evaluating the available information to identify the exact type of projectile that may have been launched.

QUESTION: And assuming that they did launch these projectiles, would this be a violation of UN resolutions?

MS. HARF: It depends. It depends on what they were. Technically, obviously any launch of anything is problematic, is escalatory in nature, is threatening. So obviously, we wouldn't agree with any launch, but in terms of the technicality, it depends on what they were.

...

QUESTION: One more on North Korea. One question -- I realize that North Korea has a very different system of freedom of speech and different ideas on that than the United States. But the North Koreans --

MS. HARF: That's the understatement of the day, I think. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: The North Koreans called on the United States to ban the film, "The Interview."

MS. HARF: I was wondering why I didn't get this yesterday. I was surprised.

QUESTION: Do you have a response to that?

QUESTION: Great film.

MS. HARF: I really don't. They, I think, had a fairly strong reaction to it, and really I think I'm going to steer clear of commenting on it, so --

QUESTION: Do you see a connection between the movie and the projectile launch?

MS. HARF: Not to my knowledge, but I'm happy to check. I just -- I don't think I have any analysis to do on that.

QUESTION: A quick question --

QUESTION: Are there any observations of why the North Koreans might be so upset about this? Does it show that more outside information is seeping in?

MS. HARF: It's a good question. I'm happy to check with our folks. I just don't know the answer.

June 25, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson

**Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea and Japan
Washington, DC**

QUESTION: The foreign minister of Japan announced that they were holding talks with North Korea next week to dig in – dig more into the abduction issue and North Korean efforts to resolve that. First, just on that, do you have any comment or response?

MS. HARF: Let me see if I have anything on that. I know we've talked about this a little bit in the past in terms of how they handle the abductions issue. I don't think I have anything new on that. I'm happy to see if there's anything to say.

QUESTION: Okay. More broadly, do you have a concern that progress between the DPRK and Japan on a purely bilateral issue might complicate efforts to coordinate on issues that are of mutual concern with the U.S.?

MS. HARF: Well, we're very closely coordinated with Japan on issues when it comes to North Korea, but on other issues as well. And we know these are very important issues for the Japanese, and again, happy to check and see if there's anything more to say on that.

QUESTION: Thanks.

June 10, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: We were wondering if – is there an update on Jeffrey Edward Fowle? Are negotiations going on to get him back? Is there a timeline?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any update. I believe my colleague, Marie, may have spoken to this, to the extent we can, a couple of days ago. I don't have any other update at this point.

...

QUESTION: So no update on, like, what his – like, where he was, whether or not there are negotiations, nothing in – on that?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any other update for you.

QUESTION: All right. Thank you.

QUESTION: You don't --

MS. PSAKI: Go ahead.

QUESTION: Just on – so you still don't have a privacy waiver?

MS. PSAKI: Not to my knowledge, no.

QUESTION: This – okay. Because his lawyer is out there talking about him being an adventurer who likes new cultures and seems to suggest that he was caught up in something. He likes to travel, loves to – the adventure of experiencing different cultures and seeing new places, and you still can't talk to us about him? You have no privacy --

MS. PSAKI: That is my understanding. I will check and see if anything has changed. And as you know, sometimes it is complicated with all of these legal requirements.

QUESTION: I'm sorry if you went over this yesterday and I missed it, but did – has the Swiss been able to --

QUESTION: The Swedish.

QUESTION: -- the Swedish, sorry – been able to provide consular visit to him?

MS. PSAKI: I don't believe we have a Privacy Act waiver in this case, so I don't think there's more details I can discuss. But I'm happy to check and see if there's more.

QUESTION: At least if you can check if the North Koreans are engaging with the Swedish on this particular matter --

MS. PSAKI: I will.

QUESTION: -- considering that they put it out through their KCNA.

MS. PSAKI: Sure, I understand. And obviously, as you know, reporting and what we can and can't say --

QUESTION: Right.

MS. PSAKI: -- can be challenging at times, but I will check and see if there's more on this case.

QUESTION: Thank you.

June 6, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: What can you tell us about the U.S. citizen that has been detained?

MS. HARF: Well, we are aware that a U.S. citizen has been detained in North Korea. This is the third U.S. citizen that has been detained in North Korea. Obviously no greater priority for us than the welfare and safety of U.S. citizens abroad, and don't have any additional information to share at this time.

QUESTION: Do you – has the U.S. citizen yet been – or is your protecting power in North Korea trying to get access to this person?

MS. HARF: So I can't speak to the specific case for privacy reasons. But in general if a U.S. citizen is detained in North Korea, our protecting power, Sweden, does attempt and will have consular access, broadly speaking, if they are allowed to.

QUESTION: And have you conveyed any messages to the North Koreans to try to discourage them from arresting your citizens?

MS. HARF: I think we've conveyed those very publicly in this room, certainly. And we have a Travel Warning that says no one should travel to North Korea, and it does include, again, broadly speaking, lines about the fact that if you are part of a tour group it will not protect you from possible arrest.

QUESTION: Marie, can I just follow up on that? So you said three citizens, one of which we know, of course, is Kenneth Bae.

MS. HARF: Uh-huh.

QUESTION: The second one – are you now in a position to confirm that there's a 24-year-old tourist named Matthew Todd Miller who's --

MS. HARF: So on the other two, I can't share any additional information about them --

QUESTION: So you still don't have a Privacy Act waiver?

MS. HARF: -- because of privacy.

QUESTION: Can I ask you if that – does that mean that your protecting power has had no access to the second person who's --

MS. HARF: I wouldn't assume that that means anything. I just can't share anything because of privacy.

...

QUESTION: If you have three U.S. citizens who are now being held in North Korea, what concretely is this building trying to do to get them free? Are you – is Ambassador King – is his visit still out there as a possible – as an invitation to the North Koreans?

MS. HARF: Uh-huh.

QUESTION: Practically, three people is – one is one; three is quite a lot now.

MS. HARF: Three is three times more than one.

QUESTION: It's three times more than one.

MS. HARF: And we continue to actively seek the release of not just Mr. Bae but of all of the individuals, all three. And per our longstanding offer, you are right; we remain prepared to send Ambassador King to North Korea in support of Mr. Bae's release. That's the only one I can speak about specifically. But obviously, broadly speaking, it's important for us to get all of our citizens home.

When it comes to Mr. Bae, I know some folks have just had questions. The last time the Department spoke with his family was on June 4th, and the last time Swedish Embassy representatives met with him – they've met with him 11 times, but the last time was on April 18th.

May 29, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

**Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea/Japan
Washington, DC**

QUESTION: Thank you. Japan and North Korea has reached an agreement that North Korea accepted to re-open the investigation into the fate of Japanese citizens it kidnapped a couple of decades ago. And Japan also agreed to ease some sanctions. First of all, you have some comment on this?

MS. PSAKI: Well, we would refer you to the Government of Japan for more information on the announcement that North Korea will re-open the investigation of all missing Japanese citizens. We continue to support Japanese efforts to resolve the abductions issue in a transparent manner, and of course we're closely coordinating with our allies and partners, including Japan, on a range of issues, so we'll remain in touch with them.

QUESTION: Do you – what do you think of the – particularly the sanction, ease of sanction, as one of the partner of the Six-Party Talk?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any other particular comment on it.

...

QUESTION: Did you get any notice from Japanese Government in advance about this agreement?

MS. PSAKI: We were notified in advance and we remain in regular contact, yes.

QUESTION: Quick one --

QUESTION: Just to clarify the question on sanctions.

MS. PSAKI: Sure.

QUESTION: It doesn't concern you that the Japanese are willing to ease sanctions against North Korea, considering that you are trying to maintain a sanctions regime on North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: Well again, I don't have any confirmation of those plans. We were alerted that they are planning to engage in these discussions, or the discussion was offered. But I'll check and see if there's more we would like to add on that front.

...

QUESTION: North Korea sanctions question. The House Foreign Affairs Committee today passed a resolution that would strengthen those questions by, among other things, mandating that the President designate officials once they've been found to be in violation. Is the State Department supportive of this initiative, this bill?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any particular comment on legislation going through Congress on that front.

May 27, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

**Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea/Japan
Washington, DC**

QUESTION: Yeah. As you know, Japan and North Korea are now having official talks at Stockholm from 26. They are talking about abduction issues, which Japanese Government want DPRK to review again. Do you support these efforts from – of Japanese Government? And what's the comment on that?

MS. PSAKI: Well, we work closely and we consult frequently with Japan on a range of issues, including North Korea. We are closely coordinating with them and we'll continue to do so. I don't know that I have a further comment, but maybe you have another question.

QUESTION: Are you asking Japanese Government to explain or consult a strategy, what the strategy of the official talks? Because as you know, DPRK didn't stop any nuclear program and provocative action. Are you in the United States Government concerning about these talks, official talks at this moment?

MS. PSAKI: We're not concerned. We consult frequently on North Korea policy with Japan and we expect that will continue.

May 22, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: Yeah. Recently between the North Korea and Russia established their economic cooperations, and also the China and Russia as well. What is the United States view of these two big brothers surround beside North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: Well, I think I spoke to the China and Russia relationship yesterday, so I'd point you to that. I'm not aware of what you're referring to as it relates to Russia and North Korea.

QUESTION: It seems like increasing of the North Korean power that the concern of a rebalancing in Asia, so is --

MS. PSAKI: I'm not sure what you're specifically referring to, so maybe you can elaborate on what you're referring to.

QUESTION: Because of increasing of North Korean power because the Chinese and Russia is surround by more power to North Korea, so kind of sanctions --

MS. PSAKI: Well, we've been working with China and Russia as well, but certainly China has been an important partner in putting the necessary pressure on the North Koreans, and especially given their provocative threats and provocative actions. So they are one of the partners in the Six-Party Talks we continue to work with.

QUESTION: I have one on North Korea. Do you have any comment on the shelling by the North Koreans of a South Korean vessel?

MS. PSAKI: Let's see. We are closely monitoring the situation on the Korean Peninsula in coordination with our South Korean allies. We urge North Korea to refrain from provocative actions that aggravate tensions and instead focus on fulfilling its international obligations and commitments. We continue to urge North Korea to exercise restraint and take steps to improve its relations with its neighbors.

May 21, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

MS. PASKI: One more update for all of you. We issued a new Travel Warning for North Korea just yesterday and I just wanted to highlight that for you. The protection of U.S. citizens overseas is one of the Department of State's highest priorities. We updated the November 20 – November 19th, 2013 Travel Warning for North Korea to warn U.S. citizens of the risk of arbitrary arrests and detention in North Korea. We strongly recommend against all travel by United States citizens to North Korea. In the past 18 months, North Korea has detained U.S. citizens who are part of organized tours. U.S. citizens should not assume that joining a group tour or using a tour guide would protect them from being detained or arrested by North Korean authorities.

...

MS. PASKI: The North Korea Travel Warning?

QUESTION: Yeah, was there some specific incident or – the November one was changed because, if I recall correctly, there had been an incident in which this guy was taken off a plane.

MS. PASKI: Well, it's a six-month update, and so, obviously, relevant --

QUESTION: All right, so there wasn't --

MS. PASKI: -- information that's happened in that time is included.

QUESTION: But you're not aware of any other American – in the last – recently being taken into custody that would – there's no incident that this is based on – this is just --

MS. PASKI: Based on the last six months.

QUESTION: Have there been any others?

MS. PASKI: Well, no, there have been the reports that you all are aware of. But obviously we take all of that into account when updating these warnings.

QUESTION: On that, could I just ask if there's news about Matthew Miller, I believe his name may have been – the one who hadn't signed a Privacy Act so we couldn't have any information about it. Are you able to give us anything on him now? And has he – have the Swedish Embassy staff been able to get in touch with him, visit him?

MS. PASKI: I have no new information on those reports.

QUESTION: So that would have been included in --

MS. PSAKI: Those reports? Yes.

QUESTION: Have we gotten to the point where the Privacy Act waiver is going to prevent you from saying that his being taken into detention is going to – is not --

MS. PSAKI: We obviously take into account --

QUESTION: -- is not a reason for the new Travel Warning?

MS. PSAKI: -- a range of reports, Matt. That is reflected, and that is why we wanted to highlight it here today.

May 19, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: Can I just ask about another incident that happened, but this time in North Korea? There are reports that last week some time there had been apartment building that collapsed, 23-story. And although it wasn't finished, there were some families, about 100 families, 92 to 100 families were already living in there. I mean, the details are very sketchy, obviously; this is North Korea. And I just wondered if by any chance you had heard any reports from – via the Swedish Embassy or any more details via your own kind of intelligence about what may or may not have happened.

MS. PSAKI: We don't have anything new to share or report. Of course, we would regret the loss of life. We regret any loss of life in an apparent tragedy like this, but we don't have any more details.

QUESTION: And as far as you know, there's been no reaching out by the North Korean authorities for any help in this, to any of the embassies that might be in --

MS. PSAKI: I'm not – not that I'm aware of. I'm sure – there's a range of embassies around the world, so I would point you to them.

...

QUESTION: What do you – do you have any reaction to the fact that the North Korean Government came out with an apology about this? This is very unusual for them to apologize for something.

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any additional comment aside from what I've offered.

May 9, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on South Korea/North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: Thank you, Jen. South Korean foreign minister visit to the United Nations New York now. Is there any significance that can tell of resumption of Six-Party Talks within this year or whatever time?

MS. PSAKI: We remain – nothing has changed about our view. We remain committed to credible negotiations to implement the September 2005 Joint Statement and bring North Korea into compliance. The ball remains in North Korea’s court. North Korea must be the ones to first take meaningful actions toward denuclearization and refrain from provocations. Obviously, we haven’t seen evidence of their willingness to do that.

QUESTION: So what is the U.S. position of resumption of Six-Party Talks currently if – even if Chinese convincing to United States, it come out Six-Party Talks table. What is your real position? Do you think the Six-Party Talks are really useful or productive, or nothing else?

MS. PSAKI: Well, we remain engaged and work closely with a range of partners in the Six-Party process and across the international community to urge North Korea to take concrete steps to enable the conditions that would facilitate a return to Six-Party negotiations leading toward complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization. But again, the ball is in North Korea’s court. We have not seen them take the necessary steps.

May 5, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: This is on North Korea. So Dennis Rodman gave this interview to this --

MS. HARF: It's been a while since we talked about Dennis Rodman.

QUESTION: Yeah. He gave this interview to this magazine, I think it's called DuJour or something. So he was -- and he was asked if he ever gave -- ever asked the U.S. Government for support in organizing his trip. And he said that six months ago, he reached out to the U.S. Government and said you should please help me. I wish you would take advantage of the situation that I have instead of ridiculing me, and he said that they never got back to him so he let it go.

MS. HARF: To my knowledge, that is not true. I will triple- and quadruple-check. To my knowledge -- we've certainly never had any contact with him. I'll check and see if he reached out, but to my knowledge we've had no contact with him.

QUESTION: But I mean, what was -- just to go back a little bit. Like, what was the problem with him and his trip? Was it that you don't think of him as a credible person to be sending a positive message to North Korea?

MS. HARF: I would stop after the word person probably -- that I don't think he's a credible person. Look, he's not a representative of the United States Government. We have mechanisms in place to talk to the North Koreans.

QUESTION: I understand. But there are other private individuals that go to North Korea, whether it's Jimmy Carter --

MS. HARF: Please do not put Dennis Rodman in the same category as Jimmy Carter.

QUESTION: I'm not -- okay. Well, then you're talking about this person.

MS. HARF: Yes.

QUESTION: I'm not --

QUESTION: Dennis Rodman wasn't good enough.

QUESTION: He's a former --

MS. HARF: Yes.

QUESTION: -- former president, Dennis Rodman. I'm not talking about -- I'm -- you're making it -- you're making a distinction between the type of individual.

MS. HARF: Yes.

QUESTION: There are plenty of private individuals that go to North Korea and you give them briefings and you talk to them and you say, "Listen, you're going as a private individual, but if you're going it would be helpful if you would send a positive message to North Korea," and there is some kind of communication. And all I'm asking is: Did you kind of write him off because you think he's a bit of a buffoon and not someone that you wanted to be associated with?

MS. HARF: Yes, but I don't know if that means he reached out and we didn't get back to him.

QUESTION: Okay.

MS. HARF: So let me check on that.

May 2, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: So a think tank that monitors North Korea's political situation discovered recently that they conducted a test of an engine for a missile, for an ICB missile that could potentially reach the continental U.S., and that the next step could be testing of an actual missile system with that engine. Is the U.S. monitoring the situation, and are there any concerns?

MS. HARF: Well, we've obviously been closely monitoring the situation. I'm not going to get into our specific intelligence assessments about the issues you raised. But to be clear, we remain fully capable of deterring, defending against, and responding to the threat posed by North Korea that I think you referenced briefly in your question.

QUESTION: And I have a follow-up question to that. If North Korea continues its provocative actions, possibly launching – test-launching an ICBM or testing a nuclear device, could that scuttle the prospect at all for any six-party talks?

MS. HARF: Well, what we've said is they should refrain from taking further escalatory action. And I would note that the exact reason we need a process in place to de-nuclearize the peninsula is because of the threat posed by North Korea. So obviously that's a process we're committed to and remain committed to.

QUESTION: Thank you.

QUESTION: Staying on North Korea.

MS. HARF: Uh-huh.

QUESTION: I don't know if you had a chance to see earlier this week the North Korean Government issued its own human rights report of – on the U.S. --

MS. HARF: Oh no, I didn't see that.

QUESTION: -- and other situations, coming on the heels of the UNCOI report and the President's visit to South Korea.

MS. HARF: What did it say?

QUESTION: It's very colorful language. It calls the --

MS. HARF: I didn't know they produced fiction. Is that – (laughter) – I'm sure it's more in that realm.

QUESTION: So I mean, it calls the U.S. “a kingdom of racial discrimination,” as well as “a living Hell.” And --

MS. HART: Wow.

QUESTION: I mean, some colorful rhetoric aside, though, it actually does raise some issues that are borne out by fact-checking, such as high incarceration rates, pervasive racial discrimination in socio-economic outcomes, and things of that sort. I mean, do you accept those criticisms as valid?

MS. HART: I don't think that there's any place for the Government of North Korea to lecture the United States on human rights, period.

May 1, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: -- on North Korea. Has the U.S. had any consular contact with the Swedes about the American who's been detained in North Korea?

MS. HARF: Are you talking about Kenneth Bae?

QUESTION: No. I believe his name is Matthew Miller, or --

MS. HARF: Don't have anything new for you on that case. Obviously, we talk to the Swedes all the time, but don't have any details on what those conversations are.

QUESTION: Are there any plans for the Swedes to contact him?

MS. HARF: Again, can't talk about this case at all.

QUESTION: Is that (inaudible) privacy waiver?

MS. HARF: Because of privacy, yes.

QUESTION: Which he is incapable of signing.

MS. HARF: Matt's favorite topic. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: But --

MS. HARF: Again, some day when you're overseas somewhere --

QUESTION: -- on another Americans in distress question --

MS. HARF: Uh-huh.

QUESTION: -- I asked yesterday about the 17-year-old in Bahrain, and I think that you also have a privacy issue with that, but I just want to make sure.

MS. HARF: That is correct as well. We're aware of the reports that a U.S. citizen has been detained in Bahrain.

QUESTION: Can't say more?

MS. HARF: Because of privacy, can't say more.

QUESTION: But -- okay. Well, do -- are you concerned about his -- the situation?

MS. HARF: Can't say any more about this issue.

QUESTION: You can't even say that you're concerned or not concerned?

MS. HARF: I can't say anything more about this specific situation because of privacy.

QUESTION: Can you say whether the U.S. government contacted his family (inaudible) or --

MS. HARF: Guys, I can't say any more because of privacy --

QUESTION: But that's his privacy --

MS. HARF: -- on either of these cases.

QUESTION: -- but we concern us too, you know.

MS. HARF: Again, I can't say anything more about either of these cases because of privacy laws that are in place to protect all of us, including you, if you were ever incarcerated overseas.

April 30, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: Again, I'd like to know if you have any more information about Matthew Todd Miller or Kenneth Bae.

MS. HARF: No update on that for you.

QUESTION: Okay, thanks.

QUESTION: I wanted to ask about North Korea as well.

MS. HARF: Uh-huh.

QUESTION: There were more reports of some more maneuvers or maneuvering, rather, going on and around the possibility of a launch. Is there --

MS. HARF: Well, we're monitoring the situation very closely, obviously, and as we always do, continue to urge North Korea to exercise restraint and refrain from actions that raise tensions. I don't have anything specific for you in terms of what may or may not happen, no guesses about what they might do. But we're watching very closely.

April 29, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: This morning, North Korea conducted some live fire exercises. Has the State Department been in contact with South Korea? And how much of a concern is this to the State Department with escalating tensions in the region, the President just getting back from the region, and looking forward to a potential nuclear test, which is a huge concern?

MS. PSAKI: Well, we are, of course, closely monitoring the situation on the Korean Peninsula. We continue to urge North Korea to exercise restraint and refrain from actions that raise tensions. We remain steadfast in our commitment to the defense of our allies, including South Korea. We coordinate closely with South Korea. But I don't have any particular update on our contacts with them this morning.

QUESTION: So additionally, how important is that communication with Japan and South Korea during this time of tension?

MS. PSAKI: As you've heard the Secretary say in the past, given the challenging issues they both face, including the threats from North Korea, it's important for them to have a dialogue and a relationship between the countries.

...

QUESTION: Okay. North Korea. Do you have anything about Matthew Todd Miller, please?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any new update to share. Go ahead.

QUESTION: Okay.

QUESTION: Russia and Iran are negotiating an \$8- to \$10 billion energy deal. First of all, do you have anything to say about the deal? And then second, do you maintain that our – the United States sanctioning of Russia is not at all affecting negotiations with the P5+1?

MS. PSAKI: We do maintain the second. As you know, the technical talks are continuing between all of the relevant countries. We've seen those reports. We don't have any confirmation of that deal actually being in place. If it were true, it would be of concern. But we don't – again, don't have confirmation of that.

QUESTION: Thank you.

April 25, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: North Korea that is. You are aware of the reports from – North Korean news agency that they have detained an American citizen. I'm wondering if you can tell us anything about this. Have you been in touch with your protecting power about it?

MS. PSAKI: Yes. We are, of course, aware of the reports that a U.S. citizen was detained in North Korea. As you all know, there's no greater priority to us than the welfare and safety of U.S. citizens. We don't have additional information to share at this time. We have been in touch with the embassy of Sweden about these reports. As you know, the – Sweden is our protecting power in North Korea.

QUESTION: Okay. You have been in touch, and as far as you know, they have not had any success?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any other updates for all of you.

QUESTION: When you say (inaudible) media reports --

MS. PSAKI: Correct.

QUESTION: -- correct? So you don't as yet have any independent knowledge?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have anything more to share with all of you. Any more on North Korea? Go ahead, Margaret.

QUESTION: A question on that. In these reports, this individual, this American citizen was claiming to seek some form of asylum in North Korea. Given – you can't talk about this particular case, but given the human rights record in North Korea, is this something you would have a fair amount of skepticism about?

MS. PSAKI: Again, because – as you all know, but it's worth repeating, absent written consent from any individual, we can't discuss a specific case. You're all familiar with our views of North Korea's human rights record. They were outlined, of course, in the Commission of Inquiry report. There have been reports about them probably on a daily basis around the world, so I don't think we have to explain that much further, but --

QUESTION: On North Korea again: The indications or not of a possible nuclear test? Nothing?

MS. PSAKI: I have nothing new to say on that beyond what I said a couple of days ago.

...

QUESTION: I should have asked you if there was any update on Ken Bae's status and whether the U.S. offer to send Ambassador King still stands.

MS. PSAKI: The offer certainly still stands. I do have just a few quick updates in terms of our contacts. The Embassy – as you all know, the Swedish Embassy continues to be our protecting power. Swedish Embassy representatives have met with Mr. Bae 11 times since his detention, most recently on April 18th, so just last week. We also remain in very close contact with his family as well.

...

QUESTION: And was he – anything on his condition at that meeting on the 18th?

MS. PSAKI: We remain deeply concerned about his health. We continue to urge North Korea – North Korean authorities to grant Mr. Bae special amnesty and immediate release on humanitarian grounds. I don't have any other specific updates on his health.

QUESTION: Staying on North Korea, yesterday President Obama said that there would be a, quote, "firm response" to any more of North Korea's nuclear provocations. I was wondering, does Secretary Kerry share in that sentiment?

MS. PSAKI: He does. And I think you've heard Secretary Kerry speak very strongly about his concerns about their threats and provocations, and he certainly shares the sentiment of the President's comments this morning.

QUESTION: And what are some examples of that?

MS. PSAKI: In what capacity?

QUESTION: Like – of a firm response. What are the options here?

MS. PSAKI: I'm not going to outline options. Obviously, the President talked about sanctions. There's a range of diplomatic tools we have at our disposal, but I don't have anything further to add to his comments.

April 23, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: So the South Korean Government has been saying that they've seen increased activity at nuclear testing sites in the North. Is this – they're concerned, obviously, that a new test could be imminent. Is this a belief that the U.S. shares, and is it a concern that you have? If you have anything to add on that.

MS. PSAKI: Well, I – we talked about this a little bit yesterday. I don't have anything new. But we've seen, of course, these reports, including the reports of the South Korean defense minister this morning about possible increased activity at North Korea's nuclear site. We're closely monitoring the situation. We obviously remain in close contact with both the South Koreans and the Japanese, and we continue to urge North Korea to refrain from actions that threaten regional peace and security, but I don't have any additional information to share.

QUESTION: And then, kind of at the same time, the regime is releasing these childhood photos of Kim Jung-un. It's very unusual for them to release a lot of information, so I wonder if you have any comment on that.

MS. PSAKI: Well, we have seen no shortage of propaganda from the North Korean regime, so that comes as no surprise. But again, I wouldn't link all of them because we don't have additional details yet on the reports of a – of increased activity.

QUESTION: (Off-mike) you regard baby and childhood photos as propaganda? I don't know. Maybe you do. I just --

MS. PSAKI: Well, I think, Matt, what I'm referring to is they have a history and a record of putting out information while their people are suffering, so --

QUESTION: Fair enough.

MS. PSAKI: Great.

April 11, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

**Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC**

QUESTION: Do you have a travel update for Ambassador Glyn Davies?

MS. PSAKI: Let me see if I have anything on that. If not, I will see what we have in the pipeline in terms of travel announcements. Let's see. Okay, I do. Let's see.

Special Representative for North Korea Policy Glyn Davies will host bilateral meetings in New York April 14th and 15th and Washington April 17th with his Chinese counterpart Wu Dawei – I think we just sent this out this morning – to exchange views on a wide range of issues related to the DPRK. Special Representative Wu's visit is part of a series of high-level, in-depth U.S.-China discussions on how to achieve our shared goal of a denuclearized North Korea in a peaceful manner.

QUESTION: For these bilateral meetings, would you be able to tell us with whom he'll be meeting with? Would they be UN officials or civilian leadership or --

MS. PSAKI: I will see if there's any more detail we can spell out for all of you.

QUESTION: And does this meeting indicate that there's now a picking up of momentum for re-executing Six-Party talks?

MS. PSAKI: This is just ongoing consultations with our partners on these important issues.

QUESTION: On North Korea.

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: Sorry.

QUESTION: Do you have any update on Kenneth Bae and his status, his well-being, and any – possibly any efforts to help get him out?

MS. PSAKI: I know we were venturing to get you an update on that, and my apologies on that. Obviously, we remain focused on securing his release. We have remaining concerns about his health. We are in close contact with his family on a very regular basis. I will check to see if we can send a quick update on last contacts out.

QUESTION: Great, thank you.

QUESTION: Jen – sorry – a follow-up on Taurean's question.

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: Why New York? Why are you meeting in New York? And I ask this because usually when you have a Washington-Pyongyang communication, direct communication, you do it through New York. So is this – are we laying the groundwork for a future diplomacy? Are the North Koreans being involved in any other talks?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any more details to lay out for you. We'll see if there's anything more we can share.

QUESTION: Okay.

QUESTION: A couple of days ago --

MS. PSAKI: Sure.

QUESTION: -- the South Korean director for the North Korean issues noted they – Japan and United States and South Korea is going to pursue the variety method of dialogue in order to resume the Six-Party Talks, which means what – I don't know exactly what the variety method of dialogue means. Is it kind of New York talk, this kind of --

MS. PSAKI: I'm not sure which announcement you're referring to.

QUESTION: Not an announcement. Just --

MS. PSAKI: Reports?

QUESTION: Debate. They talked before.

MS. PSAKI: Oh, I think regardless of those reports, our approach remains the same, which is that we are in close consultation with our partners, our Six-Party partners. Obviously, there are steps North Korea would need to take. The ball remains in their court. Nothing has changed in that regard.

QUESTION: Nothing has changed. The U.S. position is not – doesn't change?

MS. PSAKI: Nothing has changed.

April 4, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea/China
Washington, DC

QUESTION: Okay. A question on Assistant Secretary Daniel Russel's comment recently on North Korea and China. He said the most direct way for China to affect the U.S. military deployments and those strategic alliance plans is by applying China's leverage on North Korea. Is this some new thing the U.S. is offering China?

MS. HARF: No. This isn't a new thing at all. I mean, I think you heard – have certainly heard us say, have heard the Secretary and Assistant Secretary Russel say, that China is on the same page with us in terms of needing the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, and that because China has a relationship with North Korea, unlike other countries, that it does have a special role to play in terms of pushing the North Koreans to do things we'd like them to do. So this is in no way a new position.

QUESTION: But it sounds like he's indicating that the U.S. is willing to make concession if China is willing to put more pressure on North Korea.

MS. HARF: I don't think he was indicating anything like that, anything new. I think he was responding to a question on the Hill.

QUESTION: So can you confirm that if China is going to put more pressure on North Korea, the U.S. is going to decrease your military posture on Korean Peninsula?

MS. HARF: Well, a couple – well, no, I can't, because as I've said, we've repeatedly worked with China on this issue because they do have a special role to play. And I don't think that he was indicating anything new. In terms of our military posture, I'm happy to check with our Defense Department colleagues, but it's my understanding that the Assistant Secretary was not in any way indicating something like that. But I'm happy to check.

QUESTION: So you are denying – basically you're denying that the U.S. is going to make a concession?

MS. HARF: I'm saying I can't confirm that. I can't confirm that. I'm happy to check with our DOD colleagues. But again, this isn't about the U.S. making concessions. This is about us working with our international partners to see if we can get North Korea to take some steps to come back in line with their obligations. China has a special and unique role to play in that. That's my understanding that's all he was saying. Again, I'm happy to check and see if there was more that people should be reading into it.

March 31, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: Do you have a comment on developments in the Korean Peninsula where the two sides have been involved in artillery fire?

MS. HARF: Yes, I do.

QUESTION: Thanks.

MS. HARF: ... Well, certainly we note with strong concern the D.P.R.K.'s deliberate decision to further escalate tensions on March 31st, as you noted, by firing more than 500 rounds of artillery near the Northern Limit Line. Several of those shells landed south of the Northern Limit Line. This provocative barrage follows a number of short-range and medium-range ballistic missile launches, threats to conduct a nuclear test, and other provocative statements that we've seen over the past several weeks. Once again, call on the D.P.R.K. to cease and desist from needlessly threatening regional peace and security, and would note that these kind of provocations only strengthen the resolve of the international community and deepen Pyongyang's isolation, which, of course, we've said now North Korea has a choice. They can choose to further escalate or they can choose to come in line with their international obligations and rejoin the international community. Unfortunately, what we've seen recently, particularly, is the former.

QUESTION: Have U.S. officials been in touch with their South Korean counterparts since this incident?

MS. HARF: We certainly speak with our South Korean counterparts quite a bit. I can check and see if we've spoken to someone, since I'm guessing we have. I'm just not positive.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MS. HARF: We have been since – obviously, talking as well to our P5 counterparts and Security Council counterparts about possible actions.

QUESTION: Thank you.

...

QUESTION: So in light of the recent skirmish between North and South Korea, are there increasing concerns about Japan's decision to hold direct talks with North Korea?

MS. HARF: We talked about this a little last week – nothing new on it. Not to my knowledge. Obviously, we consult frequently with the Government of Japan on a wide range of issues, including North Korea. This is really an issue for them to decide.

QUESTION: Okay. And now my next question is about the International Court of Justice. They made a ruling about whaling in a case that was brought to the court by Australia. They said that Japan's whaling program is not scientific, and that they will no longer grant permits to Japan to continue its whaling program. I just wanted to know if you had any comments about that.

MS. HARP: Mm-hmm. Well, we're aware of the decision. The U.S. wasn't a party to the case. Obviously, we're reviewing the decision right now. And our position hasn't changed, that we continue to support the moratorium – excuse me – on commercial whaling that was adopted by the International Whaling Commission as a necessary measure for the conservation of large whales. So our position hasn't changed, but again, we're not a party to it, so --

QUESTION: Thank you.

March 28, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: So the UN Human Rights Council agreed on a resolution to extend its investigation into human rights abuses by North Korea.

MS. HARF: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: I wanted to know if you had any comments on that.

MS. HARF: Let me see what I have. I do. Just give me one second. The Human Rights Council did a number of things today, including that, so let me just pull this up. You're asking about North Korea specifically, right?

QUESTION: Yes.

MS. HARF: Okay. Yes. So we cosponsored this year's resolution, which was led by the EU and Japan, adopted by a vote of 30 yes, 6 no, and 11 abstentions. The text focused on the contents of the recent report of the UN's Commission of Inquiry, condemns the DPRK for its ongoing human rights violations. It also seeks to promote implementation of several of the Commission of Inquiry's recommendation, including the Security Council's consideration of a referral to the ICC and targeted sanctions against those most responsible for what the COI described as crimes against humanity.

Finally, the resolution called for the establishment of a field-based mechanism to continue the investigation and collection of testimony and evidence initiated by the COI, which would lay the groundwork for a possible accountability framework in the future.

QUESTION: And one more related to both North Korea and the UN.

MS. HARF: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: The Security Council the – issued a statement regarding North Korea's recent missile launch. I wanted to know if you had any statement regarding that as well.

MS. HARF: Yes. So this happened yesterday. The Security Council unanimously condemned the DPRK's recent ballistic missile launches in a presidential statement, which all members agreed constituted clear violations of multiple UN Security Council resolutions. The council also agreed to consult on an appropriate response. In the wake of yesterday's meeting, we remain in close consultation with our P5 members and the rest of the council on the format and content of an appropriate response that would go a little further. Nothing to preview at this point, but obviously we'll keep having the conversation and see if there's additional action we can take.

QUESTION: So what do you think was preventing stronger action against North Korea?

MS. HARF: I don't think anything's preventing stronger action. I think it's been 24 hours. We're talking about what to do next, want to do it in the right way. But nothing's preventing it. We're just figuring out the right way to do it.

Yes.

QUESTION: North Korea again? It's kind of a follow-up. So several diplomats of the North Korean sanction committee, of the council, suggested as an option they might want to extend the blacklist of entities that are related to the missile program. And I wondered what you would consider about that option, whether you would agree with that.

MS. HARF: I haven't heard about that proposal. Let me check on it.

...

QUESTION: So yesterday the Japanese minister in charge of abduction issues – Minister Furuya – said that it's possible for Japan to gradually lift its unilateral sanctions if North Korea shows sincere positive movement towards resolving the abductee issues.

MS. HARF: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: And North Korea and Japan will be meeting on Sunday. So a few days ago, you said that the United States and Japan were closely coordinating on the denuclearization issue, and I was wondering if Japan does lift the sanctions, are you worried about the coordination between the States and Japan?

MS. HARF: Well, I don't --

QUESTION: Do you think that this could weaken --

MS. HARF: I don't want to predict what might happen. (A), we are closely coordinated with our ally, Japan, on all issues related to North Korea and everything else. On this, we have continued to support Japanese efforts to resolve the abductions issue in a transparent manner. We maintain regular contact with Japan on all of these issues, and just are not concerned about us not being on the same page here.

QUESTION: Okay. So you don't think that this might weaken the overall denuclearization policy?

MS. HARF: Again, I think you're getting into a lot of hypotheticals here. We don't think there's -- we don't think there's any daylight between us on these issues, and if further things happen, I'm happy to engage on them then.

QUESTION: Okay. Thanks, Marie.

March 27, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: Yeah. Yesterday you had mentioned that North Koreans ballistic missile launch is the violation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1874.

MS. HARF: Yes.

QUESTION: Does the United States have any schedule to plan additional sanctions to North Korea, except the existing sanctions?

MS. HARF: Well, the United States has requested a Security Council meeting, which is scheduled for later today, to discuss the launches, which are a clear violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions and which threaten stability and international security. I'm not going to prejudge the outcome of this meeting. As I said yesterday, we were consulting with our P5 and other Security Council partners and regional allies, continuing those consultations. And we'll see what comes out of the meeting today and make decisions about where to go from here.

QUESTION: So U.S. didn't make any decisions right now yet?

MS. HARF: We haven't made any decisions yet. We've, again, called for this meeting today. We'll talk to the Security Council, see what people think makes sense going forward in response to the launches, and we'll go from there.

QUESTION: All right. Thank you.

March 26, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: So we all saw the statement that you guys put out on the North Korean missile launches.

MS. HARF: Where we missed the word “seriously?” Were you all guessing “very nonchalantly,” “very -- ”

QUESTION: Well, figured it wasn’t “entertaining.”

MS. HARF: Right. (Laughter.) You could play Mad Libs with the statement. Yes, you saw the statement.

QUESTION: So do you have any feeling as to why they did this? A lot of people are speculating that it was a reaction to the Obama-Abe-Park trilateral, but --

MS. HARF: I think I probably gave up long ago trying to guess why the North Koreans do things, and I don’t say that in a joking way. I say that in a quite serious way. Guessing motivations behind their actions is something that I probably wouldn’t even want to try to do. It doesn’t appear that they issued, as I said in my statement last night, any maritime notifications providing warning, which I think – don’t quote me – I guess you can quote me on this, but I’d have to triple-check – I think they’ve done in the past at times.

So this comes on the heels of two recent launches of medium-range ballistic missiles and this is a troubling and provocative escalation that we’ve seen over the past several weeks. We take it very seriously. We’re working with our partners in the region. And we’ve been very clear that we think it’s important for South Korea and Japan to have a better relationship and to work together both directly and trilaterally.

So that’s a very high priority for us and we think in no way should result in action like this, and I don’t even know if that was the cause.

QUESTION: Do you have any indication as to – so the statement mentioned appropriate measures that you’re considering in consultation with allies.

MS. HARF: Yep.

QUESTION: Do you have any sense – can you give us any sense of what those appropriate measures might comprise?

MS. HARF: We're talking to our partners on the Security Council particularly right now, but also our other regional allies to determine what the best way is to move forward.

QUESTION: So should we expect another Security Council resolution in the --

MS. HARF: I don't have any predictions to make. I think we're talking to them about what the most appropriate response will be.

QUESTION: Okay. And then just last, to follow up, so -- I mean, this is kind of like an escalation, as the statement noted.

MS. HARF: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: And that's despite repeated urgings by the U.S. to refrain from taking these kinds of actions.

MS. HARF: And others.

QUESTION: I mean, do you -- this is kind of like a restatement of my previous question, but do you see any kind of way that the U.S. can exercise leverage to prevent this other than just using words?

MS. HARF: Well, we've done more than use words. We have incredibly tough sanctions on North Korea. We have said that North Korea has a choice. It can take steps to end escalatory actions. It can take steps to denuclearize. It can take steps to stop committing gross human rights violations and rejoin the international community and give its people the future they deserve. But those are choices the North Korean Government has to make, and we've been clear that the sanctions, the diplomatic isolation, the economic isolation, the political isolation -- that will all continue as long as they don't.

So, yes, you're correct in that they did launch these missiles, that they've escalated their actions quite a bit over the last few weeks, but they still remain incredibly isolated in all of the ways I said and will continue to be, which is certainly not good for the people of North Korea. These are decisions that the North Korean Government could take today to help improve the lives of their people, and they're not doing it.

QUESTION: So do you think further sanctions against North Korea should be taken?

MS. HARF: Further -- I think I just addressed that -- that we're talking to our Security Council partners right now and our regional allies to figure out what the best response will be, what the most appropriate response will be. And if and when we have further policy decisions to make, we will, but nothing to predict.

QUESTION: So the Japanese will have direct meetings with the North Koreans on March 30th?

MS. HARF: Yes.

QUESTION: Given North Korea's recent provocations, would the State Department view these – the timing of such talks as productive?

MS. HARF: Well, as you know, we consult frequently with Japan on North Korea and a wide variety of other issues, but specifically on North Korea. And I don't have details about the timing. Obviously, we and Japan are committed to the goal of denuclearization on the peninsula, to working together to isolate North Korea towards that end. And I would refer you to the Japanese Government for why they chose this specific timing.

QUESTION: So will the State Department reiterate the importance of Six-Party – or of negotiating this issue within a framework of Six-Party talks to the Japanese, or --

MS. HARF: We're all on the same page. Nothing's changed in terms of the way – the path forward here if North Korea chooses to take it and the diplomatic mechanisms we would use to do that.

...

QUESTION: Might as well. This is a little off the beaten track but is related to Russia.

MS. HARF: Okay.

QUESTION: So the – one of the principal owners of the NBA – of the Brooklyn Nets is Russian.

MS. HARF: Yes.

QUESTION: And President Putin has pushed Russian businessmen in recent weeks to de-offshore companies owned abroad and bring them home, pay Russian taxes, and help grow the economy. So now the principal owner of the Nets is now saying that he may do this and move the principal ownership headquarters to Russia. And I was just wondering if you have any thoughts on that.

MS. HARF: Isn't there an – and I'm asking this, actually, because I'm not sure of all the details – I think there's an NBA process for how that would have to take place, and that's not --

QUESTION: There is an NBA process --

MS. HARF: Right.

QUESTION: -- but I'm just wondering, in terms of Russian ownership of companies in this country, particularly franchises that are beloved in this country, whether you think that's a good idea?

MS. HARF: Are you a big Nets fan?

QUESTION: I am.

MS. HARF: I can look into it.

QUESTION: I was a bigger fan when they were in New Jersey. (Laughter.)

MS. HARF: I have just sort of seen some of the articles. I haven't actually talked to our folks about their thoughts on this kind of --

QUESTION: Could you take the question?

MS. HARF: I can take the question, yes.

QUESTION: Thank you.

MS. HARF: I will take the question.

QUESTION: On Russia.

MS. HARF: Uh-huh.

QUESTION: Did you address what the President said yesterday about Russia being a regional power? Was that addressed today?

MS. HARF: No, it wasn't addressed today.

QUESTION: Okay. I mean, but does that classify it as, let's say, Iran and Israel and Turkey -- is that what is meant by it, or is it intended --

MS. HARF: Well, did you just hear the President's fairly lengthy speech he gave?

QUESTION: Okay. Yes. Right.

MS. HARF: I'd point out -- and I think putting it into some context of what we he said yesterday -- let me just read from what he said. And this is in the context of pushing back on this notion that there is somehow a new Cold War, right? He said, "This is not another Cold War. After all, unlike the Soviet Union, Russia leads no bloc of nations, no global ideology. And nor does the United States or NATO seek any conflict with Russia." So I think it's speaking to the same point, right, that Russia has quite a bit of pride and nationalism, and that's okay, that's good. We have no -- we don't want to in some -- any way take that away. But that -- and they have long cultural, economic ties in Ukraine. But that doesn't mean that, as he said, they can run roughshod over Ukraine or they can choose the future of Ukraine for the Ukrainian people. So I think putting his comments into context about what he said today -- this isn't the Cold War, this isn't the Soviet Union; we're not fighting proxy wars all over the world anymore. We are talking about a violation of another country's territorial integrity and sovereignty, a violation of international norms that just several weeks ago we all took as fact.

QUESTION: But that's not really answering the question, though, about --

MS. HARF: It is.

QUESTION: -- whether Russia is a regional power versus a global power, which you seem to be -- to consider them one when you need them for dealing with stuff, whether it's Iran --

MS. HARF: Well --

QUESTION: -- or Syria or nuclear disarmament or arms control or other things.

MS. HARF: I think what he was referring to was -- in terms of global versus regional -- was what he said today: They don't lead a bloc of nations. This isn't spheres of influence that we used to have. This is a very time than we were then, and that's why -- for many reasons, but one of the reasons why -- we don't believe Russia should get to send troops into other countries, not let the Ukrainian people decide their own future -- as the President said, run roughshod over one of their neighbors.

QUESTION: So you're not discounting that they are a global power in addition to being a regional power in Eastern Europe?

MS. HARF: I'm not -- I guess I'm not further parsing the President's words.

QUESTION: Well, but what he seemed to be doing was making a dig at President Putin --

QUESTION: Right.

QUESTION: -- to say that he wasn't a kind of global superpower along the lines of what they used to be. He was calling him like a little rinky-dink regional power.

MS. HARF: Did he use the term rinky-dink?

QUESTION: He didn't, but that was certainly the implication --

MS. HARF: Well, I think what the --

QUESTION: -- and that's how everybody interpreted it.

MS. HARF: And I'm actually not -- I'm saying that today's comments actually put his comments yesterday into context, right, that when he said that it's -- it is no longer a situation where the Soviet Union has a bloc of nations all over the world. It's just a very different situation that we're in today. This isn't a new Cold War. This isn't where we were 30, 40, 50 years ago. And I think, yes, Russia's an important player -- they are. But that doesn't mean they get to break international law and flout international norms.

QUESTION: So that isn't – what he said today is not really retracting what he said yesterday --

MS. HARF: No, not at all.

QUESTION: -- because as Elise said, I mean, the implicit, the caveat, whatever you want to call it, was to belittle Russia, I mean, and on a day that the U.S. astronauts basically used a Russian rocket to go into space. So --

MS. HARF: I love sometimes how you bring two things together that have nothing to do with each other.

QUESTION: No, I mean, but that – I mean, do you consider it as a global power or do you consider it as a regional power in the league of, let's say, Iran, Turkey, Israel?

MS. HARF: Why are you choosing those three countries, Said?

QUESTION: No, I'm not. I'm just saying --

MS. HARF: Those are an interesting three countries --

QUESTION: -- when you talk about regional powers in my part of the world, that's what we talk about. That's all. (Laughter.)

MS. HARF: I fully stand by what the President said. And what he was – and he was – and again, I keep going back to today's comments, but I think it actually illustrates the notion that he was saying yesterday.

March 24, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: Okay. Do you know that already, the past couple days, North Korea launched another short-range missiles --

MS. HARF: Rockets, I think, is the more technical term, yeah.

QUESTION: -- 30 -- yeah, rocket -- 30 times toward the -- near east coast of South Korea. Are these missile launch --

MS. HARF: Rockets.

QUESTION: -- a violation of the UN Security Resolution 1874.

MS. HARF: Yeah. Well, we're obviously aware of reports that they fired a number of rockets into the sea. I think "rockets" is the more technical term. We're obviously monitoring the situation. To my knowledge, I think because these are, again, short-range rockets, they would not be in violation.

QUESTION: Okay, thank you.

MS. HARF: Yep.

March 20, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on Japan/North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: So after having unofficial talks in China, Japan and North Korea agreed to have official talks concerning North Korea's abduction of Japanese citizens, as well as North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. Do you have any reaction to that? Do you welcome these talks?

MS. PSAKI: Well, naturally, I'd point you, of course, to the Government of Japan on these specific – and I think I spoke to this the other day, but I could be wrong – to the specific nature of these talks. Obviously, we remain committed to the Six-Party process. We're engaged with our – all of our partners in the region, including Japan on that, and stay very closely linked up as it relates to meetings and engagements.

QUESTION: So the U.S. won't have any role in these direct talks between Japan and North Korea?

MS. PSAKI: Well, we're engaged closely with Japan, and all of our – all of the parties in the Six-Party Talks about engagements and steps. But again, I'd point you to the Government of Japan for any specifics.

...

QUESTION: Sorry, can I just follow up on that earlier --

MS. PSAKI: Sure.

QUESTION: -- question before we move on? When you say the U.S. is – remains committed to the Six-Party process, it is still your position, though, that before actual talks could resume, you would need to see some kind of steps taken on the North Korean side, correct?

MS. PSAKI: Absolutely. What I was conveying there – and thank you for the question – was that we're in very close contact and coordination with our partners, but certainly, the ball remains in North Korea's court --

QUESTION: Sure.

MS. PSAKI: -- and they have not taken steps to abide by their international obligations.

QUESTION: Would you see a positive outcome from these talks such as some kind of movement, progress made on the abduction issue as something in – a step in that direction?

MS. PSAKI: There are very specific steps that North Korea needs to take. You're familiar with them – abiding by the 2005 Joint Statement, taking steps on their nuclear program. I think it's pretty clearly laid out, so that's what they would need to do.

QUESTION: Got it.

MS. PSAKI: Go ahead.

QUESTION: Well --

MS. PSAKI: Well, okay. Go in the back and then we'll do Scott and we'll come back to you, okay? Okay. Go ahead.

QUESTION: So I was just wondering if you had anything to – like a readout from Ambassador King's trip to Geneva?

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: And more so, he also said that there will be pressure on North Korea whether – even if China blocks the UN Security Council resolution. So if you could talk a little bit more about these pressures?

MS. PSAKI: Sure. Well, Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights Issues Robert King traveled to Geneva March 17th through 19th to participate in the UN Human Rights Council's 25th session. He had productive meetings with the members of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay, and other officials. He's returning – he returned to Washington, I should say, on March 19th.

As Ambassador King said in Geneva, we strongly support the commission's final report and its calls for accountability in Geneva. We have urged the Office of the High Commissioner to establish a field-based mechanism for continued monitoring and documenting human rights abuses in North Korea which will carry on the investigative work of the commission and support the work of the Special Rapporteur. More broadly, we are still considering possible next steps. We look forward to supporting a strong Human Rights Council North Korea resolution that pursues actions that lay the groundwork to hold North Korea accountable for its continuing and systematic violation of human rights.

March 17, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea, via telephone

Washington, DC

MS. PSAKI: In addition, I have one announcement at the top. Earlier today, in its 25th session in Geneva, the UN Human Rights Council reviewed the human rights record of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and heard from the UN Commission of Inquiry disturbing details, evidence of past and ongoing human rights abuses in North Korea. During the session, the Chairman, Michael Kirby, announced the commission's conclusion that, "A wide array of crimes against humanity arising from 'policies established at the highest level' have been committed and continue to take place in North Korea."

As U.S. Special Envoy for North Korean Human Rights Issues Robert King stated at the UN Human Rights Council session, "The United States commends the Commission of Inquiry's excellent and comprehensive report to the council, which documents the systematic, widespread, and gross human rights violations in North Korea, and strongly supports the Commission's calls for accountability.

...

QUESTION: Shifting it to Asia, yesterday, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said that a reunion took place between a Japanese woman, Ms. Megumi Yokota. She was abducted by North Koreans in the 1970s. She was reunited with her parents according to the foreign ministry yesterday. So how does the State Department – or what do they – what does the Department think of these recent developments?

...

MS. PSAKI: Great. Thank you for your patience. So we of course, in this case, refer you to the Government of Japan for details. We support efforts by Japan to resolve the abductions issues in a transparent manner. And we continue to closely coordinate with Japan on a full range of North Korean issues. We also – including humanitarian issues. So we are in close contact with them. I would refer you to the Government of Japan for details. We value our close coordination on issues including humanitarian cases, including issues that – as it relates to the threat from North Korea. But I'd point you to them otherwise.

QUESTION: Okay. Thanks for coming back to me. I have one follow-up on that question.

MS. PSAKI: Sure.

QUESTION: So some are reporting that this is an overture from North Korea to encourage a direct dialogue between Japan and North Korea. What would the State Department think of such a dialogue? Would it welcome that sort of thing or is that something that would not be particularly welcome?

MS. PSAKI: Well, the United States remains prepared, as we long have, to engage constructively with North Korea. But the ball is in North Korea's court. They must live up to their commitments, adhere to their international obligations, deal peacefully with their neighbors, and refrain from provocations. Obviously, we haven't seen evidence of their willingness to do that.

QUESTION: Okay. Thank you.

March 14, 2014

Marie Harf, Deputy Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: Thank you, Marie. (Inaudible.) On North Korea, it is reported that the North Korean missile launch issue will be bring into UN security committee on next week.

MS. HARF: Next week?

QUESTION: Yeah, March 19th.

MS. HARF: Is there a specific meeting on it next week?

QUESTION: Yeah, March 19th, they reported.

MS. HARF: Okay.

QUESTION: Did the – does the U.S. have any individual sanctions against North Korea regarding this issue?

MS. HARF: We have a whole plethora of sanctions on North Korea about a whole host of issues, including its missile program, including its nuclear program. I'm not familiar with the specific topic of next week's Security Council meeting.

QUESTION: But the reason they missile launch --

MS. HARF: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: -- North Korea missile launch, do you know reason they did launch the 10 missiles?

MS. HARF: Well, I think – again, not knowing the specifics of what meeting you're asking about, I think these missile launches tend to be in violation of a slew of UN Security Council resolutions. We have a number of sanctions on them, both international multilateral sanctions and also bilateral sanctions, but let me see if I can get more on that specific meeting.

March 10, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea

Washington, DC

QUESTION: One is, I was just wondering if you have any reaction to elections, using the term loosely, in North Korea, or the --

MS. PSAKI: I will simply say that is not a model for democracy around the world.

QUESTION: Okay.

MS. PSAKI: Japan?

QUESTION: And then -- yeah --

QUESTION: Wait a second. Are you suggesting that it's necessarily wrong for one candidate to get 100 percent of the vote? (Laughter.) What if that's an -- what if it was actually free and fair and that happened?

MS. PSAKI: It would be a historic outcome, Matt. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: What if he's the only one that wanted to run, though?

MS. PSAKI: I don't know that I have much more analysis for all of you, as fun as this is. (Laughter.)

March 3, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson

Daily Press Briefing, selections on North Korea, (via telephone)

Washington, DC

QUESTION: I have a question on – about a recent missile launch talking about North Korea. This is their second in the last week. I want to know if the State Department has a response to their latest provocative action.

MS. PSAKI: Sure. Well just to repeat for those of you who are not focused on this at this moment, let me just give you a little more information. According to U.S. Government information, North Korea launched two Scud class short-range ballistic missiles from its southeast coast Monday morning. Both missiles flew in a northeasterly direction and landed in the sea. We are continuing to closely monitor North Korean activities and intentions, and we're closely monitoring the situation on the Korean peninsula.

We urge North Korea to refrain from provocative actions that aggravate tensions, and instead focus on fulfilling its international obligations and commitments, including by abiding with the United States – United Nations Security Council Resolution 1718, 1874, and 2094. Scud missile launches are a violation of these UN Security Council resolutions. These resolutions require North Korea to abandon its ballistic missile program in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner. So we urge North Korea to exercise restraint and take steps to improve its relations with its neighbors. The onus is on North Korea to refrain from provocations.

February 27, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, Selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: Does the State Department have any reaction to the firing of the four what's reported to be short-term – short-range missiles? And also the reports are that it's linked to their displeasure or North Koreans' unhappiness with the U.S.-R.O.K. military exercises in particular. Do you have anything on that?

MS. PSAKI: Sure. Well, we are of course closely monitoring the situation on the Korean Peninsula. We continue, as we often do, to urge North Korea to exercise restraint and take steps to improve its relations with its neighbors. As you know, the United States works very closely with the international community and our partners in the region to address global security and proliferation threat – the proliferation threat posed by North Korea. I'm not in a position to analyze, obviously, this – these reports just came out this morning – in terms of what the motivation of it was. I can't speak to that.

QUESTION: Anything about what kind of missiles that were fired? Some speculation that they were Scud missiles.

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any more details on that, and of course, I'm not going to comment on intelligence matters.

QUESTION: One more on North Korea.

MS. PSAKI: Sure.

QUESTION: North Koreans just asked the Japanese to reconvene the Red Crosses to reopen the talks in China, and they agreed. Can you comment on that? Is it good sign?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any details on that. But again, I'm happy to check and see if there's more we can report to all of you.

Do we have any more?

QUESTION: Oh, yeah.

MS. PSAKI: Okay. Go ahead.

QUESTION: I've got four really brief ones.

MS. PSAKI: Oh. All right.

QUESTION: All right, one --

MS. PSAKI: It's like a rapid round.

QUESTION: Three -- yes, it'll be the speed round.

MS. PSAKI: Okay.

QUESTION: Three of them are follow-ups from yesterday's briefing.

MS. PSAKI: Okay.

QUESTION: One: Did you get any answer on this -- whether you think it's a good or bad idea or you have no opinion on these potential new Chinese holidays?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any new policy on holidays to report to you.

QUESTION: Okay. Does that mean that you have asked and that there is not going to be any answer forthcoming, or --

MS. PSAKI: I don't believe there is going to be an answer forthcoming.

QUESTION: Okay.

MS. PSAKI: So don't hit refresh on your inbox.

February 26, 2014

Jen Psaki, Spokesperson
Daily Press Briefing, Selections on North Korea
Washington, DC

QUESTION: Thanks, Jen. Recently, United Nations Human Rights Committee has been reported to bring North Korea to the International Criminal Court for serious human rights violation done by North Korea.

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: What is the United States position on that matters?

MS. PSAKI: I believe we put a statement out or I spoke about this a week or so ago, so I would point you to those comments. Obviously we read those reports closely. We too have concerns about the dire human rights situation in North Korea, and it's one that we raise frequently with our counterparts.