
INTER-KOREAN SUMMIT SEEN AS OVERTURE TO KIM JONG-UN'S MEETING WITH TRUMP, EXPERT SAYS

-

17.04.2018

Russian News Agency (17 April 2018)

The upcoming summit of the leaders of the two Koreas scheduled for April 27 is expected to be an overture to a possible meeting between Kim Jong-un and Donald Trump, Rhee Sang Hyong, a principal researcher at South Korea's Sejong Institute and President of the Korean Nuclear Policy Society, told TASS on Monday.

"The inter-Korean summit can be seen as a touchstone, an overture ahead of a more important North Korea-US summit," he said, adding that if both summits were a success "many possibilities," such as normalization of political relations, economic cooperation, etc., would open up for all the participants, especially Pyongyang.

According to Rhee Sang Hyong, the major challenge at the forthcoming meetings is a gap in the US and North Korea's approaches to the problem of denuclearization. "The United States will insist on complete, irreversible and verifiable North Korea's abandonment of its nuclear program in rigid timeframe. Pyongyang, on its part, stands for prolonged parallel step-by-step actions. It looks like we will be able to see how this gap can be bridged only at the meeting," he noted.

The South Korean expert anticipated that the inter-Korean summits major goal is to have Kim Jong-un personally confirm his country's readiness for denuclearization. "It is very important for the United States as only after that timeframes for North's nuclear disarmament could be agreed at the North Korea-US summit. And after that it will be possible to discuss concrete steps on the operating level," he said.

Nevertheless, in his words, any outcome of the summit with Pyongyang will do for Washington, even its complete failure. "The United States has nothing to lose. If visible progress in dialogue is reached, it will be a good outcome in itself and Trump will be able to claim the Nobel Peace Prize. If it fails, Trump will have all the legal grounds to augment pressure on North Korea explaining it by the failure of diplomatic efforts," Rhee Sang Hyong added.

A South Korean delegation met with Kim Jong-un in Pyongyang on March 5. The talks yielded an agreement to organize a meeting between the leaders of the two Koreas. North Korea also expressed readiness to hold a summit meeting with the US president.

<http://tass.com/world/1000105>

Kaynak/Source: