
KIM JONG UN VOWS TO 'LEAVE THE PAST BEHIND' AFTER HISTORIC SINGAPORE SUMMIT WITH DONALD TRUMP

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12.06.2018

Channel News Asia (12 June 2018)

United States President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met for the first time in Singapore for a much-anticipated summit on Tuesday (Jun 12), which the latter hailed as "historic".

The leaders held talks for several hours along with delegates, before signing a document in which both committed to work towards the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

At the signing, both Kim and Trump expressed satisfaction at how their landmark meeting went - with the US leader saying it was "better than expected" as they negotiated an end to a decades-old stand-off.

Kim said the "world will now see a major change" following the Singapore summit.

The pair signed what Trump called a "pretty comprehensive" and "very important" document, which spoke of "new US-DPRK relations" and committed Washington to "security guarantees".

When asked about denuclearisation Trump said "we're starting that process", adding that it would begin "very, very quickly."

SUMMIT STARTS WITH HANDSHAKE

The historic first handshake took place at 9.05am at the Capella hotel in Sentosa, in front of a display of North Korean and US flags. Both Trump and Kim smiled and exchanged pleasantries before posing for photographs.

They then adjourned to a sitting room where both Trump and Kim fielded questions. Trump spoke first and said: "Its my honour ... We will have a terrific relationship I have no doubt."

Trump Kim sit down

US President Donald Trump and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un sit down for their historic US-North Korea summit, at the Capella Hotel on Sentosa island in Singapore on Jun 12, 2018.

Speaking in Korean, Kim said that "it was not easy to get here" and "the old prejudices and practices worked as obstacles, but we have overcome them and we are here today".

The leaders then proceeded to have a one-on-one meeting with only their translators present, before stepping out after around 40 minutes to wave at the assembled media from a balcony.

The US president described his private meeting with Kim as "very good, very very good".

image: 

Trump Kim balcony wave

US President Donald Trump (R) waves as he and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un look on from a veranda during their historic US-North Korea summit. (Photo: AFP/Saul Loeb)

They were later joined by their delegations for a series of meetings.

"Working together we will get it taken care of," Trump told Kim at the start of the wider meeting. "We will solve it."

Both sides proceeded to have a scheduled working lunch after their meetings. Among the dishes for lunch were prawn cocktail, Yangzhou fried rice and beef short rib confit.

Oiseon, a Korean stuffed cucumber, was served for starters, and Haagen-Dazs vanilla ice cream and dark chocolate tartlet ganache were served for dessert.

"A lot of progress, really very positive - better than anybody could have expected," Trump told the media after his lunch meeting with Kim as they strolled out of the hotel side by side. "Top of the line, really good."

He then added that he and Kim would be signing a document at the Singapore summit.

The two leaders even spent a short moment without their translators as they tried to build rapport between themselves. Trump even showed Kim his presidential limo, dubbed The Beast.

"THE WORLD WILL SEE A MAJOR CHANGE": KIM

Trump Kim Sign 2

US President Donald Trump and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un look on as documents are exchanged between US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the North Korean leader's sister Kim Yo Jong. (Photo: AFP/Saul Loeb)

At around 1.40pm, the leaders emerged along with key officials to sign a document.

"A lot of work and a lot of preparation went into this," said Trump. "The meeting went better than expected and no one could've expected this."

Kim expressed thanks to the US president for the summit's success.

"We had a historic meeting and weve decided to leave the past behind," he said. "The world will see a major change. I would like to express my gratitude to President Donald Trump for making this happen."

Both leaders shook hands again at the signing table with Trump saying he had developed a "special bond" with his younger counterpart.

Asked by reporters if he would invite Kim to Washington, Trump said: "Absolutely, I would."

As both leaders stood on the verandah before Kim's departure from the Capella hotel, Trump said: "We'll meet again. We will meet many times." The president added that he learned Kim is a "very talented man" and "loves his country very much".

Trump said Kim was a "worthy negotiator", adding the North Korean leader had a "great personality" and was "very smart".

A HISTORIC DAY UNFOLDS

Anticipation had been building in the lead-up to the unprecedented summit, with crowds lining the streets of Singapore when they arrived on Sunday.

Both leaders left their hotels in the Orchard area of Singapore shortly after 8am local time on Tuesday as they headed for Sentosa, which is off Singapores southern coast.

image: 

Trump motorcade 4

US President Donald Trump departs for Capella hotel ahead of the Trump-Kim summit. (Photo: Hanidah Amin)

The route was lined by curious on-lookers and the media, with people standing three- to four-deep

in some parts taking photos and waving as they craned to catch a glimpse of the leaders.

Trump, who left at around 8.05am from the Shangri-La Hotel, tweeted en route to the summit venue on a US Supreme Court ruling.

image: 

The motorcade of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un travels towards Sentosa for his meeting with U.S.

The motorcade of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un travels towards Sentosa for his meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump, in Singapore June 12, 2018. REUTERS/Tyrone Siu

Kim left the St Regis hotel shortly before 8.15am as his convoy — comprising about 20 security, North Korean state media and official vehicles — made its way to Sentosa.

Crowds also camped out at VivoCity, outside the Sentosa Gateway, and on pavements in Sentosa to take photos and wave at the passing convoys of both leaders.

Kim arrived for the meeting with his sister and confidante Kim Yo Jong and his trusted aide Kim Chang Son.

image: 

Kim arrive Capella

North Korea leader Kim Jong Un arrives at Capella hotel.

TRUMP BEGAN DAY ON OPTIMISTIC NOTE

The extraordinary summit - unthinkable only months ago - comes after the two nuclear-armed foes appeared on the verge of conflict late last year as they slung personal insults and Kim conducted nuclear and missile tests.

In a series of tweets early Tuesday morning Singapore time, Trump indicated that summit preparations were "going well and quickly".

"We will all know soon whether or not a real deal, unlike those of the past, can happen," he

tweeted - before hitting out in a subsequent post at "haters & losers" who see the summit itself as a risky up-front concession to Kim.

Pointing at the recent release of three American hostages and Pyongyang's pledge to refrain from further nuclear or missile tests, Trump charged that "these pundits, who have called me wrong from the beginning, have nothing else they can say!"

"We will be fine!" he tweeted.

Trump had also said that he would use what he says are long-honed instincts to see whether Kim was bluffing, buying time or serious.

Both Kim and Trump held bilateral talks with Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on Monday, when the US president also met with the American community in Singapore at the Shangri-La Hotel.

Prime Minister Lee had on Sunday said that Singapore will spend S\$20 million on the summit, adding that he hoped the historic meeting would result in a positive outcome.

U.S. President Donald Trump attends a lunch with Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at

U.S. President Donald Trump attends a lunch with Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the Istana in Singapore June 11, 2018. Mandatory credit Ministry of Communications and Information, Singapore/Handout via REUTERS

Kim took in the sights of the city on Monday night as he visited Gardens by the Bay and walked along the Marina Bay waterfront.

He was accompanied by a phalanx of bodyguards and North Korean state media personnel, as well as Singapore's Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan and Education Minister Ong Ye Kung.

Kim Jong Un

North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un visits The Marina Bay Sands hotel in Singapore. (REUTERS/Edgar Su)

DEAL REMAINS TO BE SEEN

On the eve of the meeting, aides from both sides were still scrambling to narrow yawning differences over "denuclearisation", which means vastly different things to the two parties.

"The complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula is the only outcome that the United States will accept," US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on the eve of the summit.

Pompeo added that the US was willing to offer the regime "unique" security guarantees, to "provide them sufficient certainty that they can be comfortable that denuclearisation is not something that ends badly for them".

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