
US SIGNALS TO MEDIATE S.KOREA-JAPAN TRADE DISPUTE

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A top U.S. diplomat Wednesday said that Washington will do what it can to resolve trade war between its two close allies -- South Korea and Japan.

"The U.S. places a great priority on strengthening relations between our country and our two close allies between the RoK and Japan. The truth is no significant issue can be resolved without cooperation between our two allies," David Stilwell, who is U.S. President Donald Trump's top official on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, told media in Seoul.

RoK stands for South Korea's official name -- Republic of Korea.

Stilwell is on three-day visit to South Korea where he held detailed discussions with top South Korean officials. He discussed Japan's restrictions on exports to Seoul, Korean news Yonhap reported.

On July 4, Japan had directed slowing down exports of three key industrial materials, used in semiconductors and displays to South Korea. The material is believed critical to Seoul's booming smart phone and TV industry.

"So fundamentally, RoK and Japan must resolve this sensitive matter and we hope that resolution happens soon. The U.S. as close friends and allies to both will do what it can to support their efforts to resolve [the situation]," Stilwell added.

After the meeting, a South Korean official saying, that the U.S. representative was apprised of the seriousness of the situation. Stilwell sufficiently understood the seriousness of the issue, said Kim Hyun-chong, deputy director of the South Korean presidential National Security Office.

Stilwell, a former Air Force official, visited Japan before coming to South Korea.

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