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## **JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA TO HOLD FIRST TALKS ON TRADE CONTROLS SINCE TOKYO CURBED TECH EXPORTS**

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The Japan Times (5 December 2019)

Senior trade officials from Japan and South Korea will meet on Dec. 16 to discuss Tokyos tightened controls on tech-related exports to its Asian neighbor, industry minister Hiroshi Kajiyama said Thursday.

The talks, to be held in Tokyo, will be the first of their kind since Japan implemented the control measures in July, prompting a further deterioration in bilateral ties already strained over the issue of compensation for wartime labor. The last round of such talks on trade control were also held in 2016.

Japan has placed stricter regulations on exporting some materials to South Korea used to manufacture semiconductors and display panels that are crucial for its dominant tech industry.

Tokyo also removed South Korea from a white list of trusted trade partners, claiming Seoul is not doing enough to ensure goods that can be diverted for military use are not smuggled into other countries.

I hope that through dialogue, we can step up cooperation on nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Kajiyama told reporters.

He hinted that if South Korea improved its controls, theres a possibility that Japan may revise the current export controls against South Korea.

The two countries agreed Wednesday in a preparatory meeting in Vienna on the date for the director general-level talks. Japans Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry had cited a lack of policy dialogue as one of the reasons for its loss of trust in South Korea.

South Korea, meanwhile, has demanded that the tighter export controls be lifted, calling them retaliation for the countrys top court rulings ordering Japanese firms to compensate people who claimed they were victims of forced labor during the 1910-1945 period when the Korean Peninsula was under Japans colonial rule.

Seoul had filed a complaint with the World Trade Organization over Tokyos tightening of export controls and threatened to terminate a bilateral military intelligence-sharing pact, but last month said it is putting both steps on hold while the trade talks with Japan continue.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/12/05/business/japan-south-korea-first-trade-talks-since-curbs/#.XeizRegzY2w>

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