

## North Korea nuke talks slow, South says

*by UPI*

SEOUL -- Six-party talks aimed at encouraging North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons program needs solidarity, South Korean Foreign Minister Song Min-soon said. Song told the audience at Yonsei University in Seoul that the United States, North and South Korea, China, Japan and Russia should avoid inter-group arrangements, saying such agreements could derail negotiations, the Korea Times said. The statements come as China, North Korea and Russia criticized the incoming government of South Korea for pushing for stronger ties with Japan and the United States. Japan is also refusing aid to North Korea because of hostilities over Japanese citizens missing there, Song said. The overall progress of the six-party nuclear negotiations slowed, Song said, as North Korea failed to meet transparency deadlines in 2007. North Korea is to abandon its nuclear weapons program in exchange for economic aid and normalized diplomatic relations with the United States.

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