

Report: N.Korea to meet nuclear commitment

by UPI

PYONGYANG, North Korea - North Korea Tuesday reassured the west it will meet its Feb. 13 denuclearization pledge after retrieving its \$25 million frozen in a Macao bank.

The North's Korean Central News Agency quoted a foreign ministry spokesman who said his country "still remains unchanged" in its willingness to implement the Feb. 13 agreement and that it will start to implement the agreement "as soon as the issue of the frozen funds has been completely settled."

The report said North Korea also will "start sincere negotiations with the United States to talk about a series of issues on the next phase of nuclear disarmament."

The Feb. 13 deal calls on North Korea to shut down and seal its Yongbyon nuclear facility within 60 days in exchange for 50,000 tons of heavy fuel oil or equivalent aid, China's Xinhua news agency said.

That process was to have started by April 14 but the deadline passed because of the issue of the \$25 million.

The money was frozen at Macao's Banco Delta Asia bank in September 2005 after the United States blacklisted the bank, claiming it helped North Korea circulate counterfeit bills. Since then, Macao authorities have unblocked the \$25 million but North Korea has not yet received the funds because of technical difficulties.

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