

20th North-South Ministerial Talks Close

March 2, 2007

The 20th North-South Ministerial Talks which were opened here on Feb. 27 closed Friday. At the talks both sides demonstrated internally and externally their will to develop the inter-Korean relations on a new higher stage and reached an agreement on a series of issues.

A joint press release on the talks was adopted at the talks held Friday.

The press release said:

At the talks both sides have agreed on the following points on the basis of the shared understanding that the north-south relations should be brought back on track as early as possible and put on a new higher stage in the basic spirit of the June 15 joint declaration:

The north and the south agreed to settle all the issues concerning the inter-Korean relations in the idea common to the nation and in its interests through discussion at talks between the authorities of both sides.

The north and the south agreed to make concerted efforts for the satisfactory implementation of all the agreements reached at the third session of the fifth round of the six-party talks to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula and ensure peace there.

The north and the south agreed to take positive practical measures to achieve national reconciliation and unity. In this regard they agreed to take an active part in grand festivals for national reunification slated to take place in Pyongyang and in a place of the south side on the occasions of June 15 and August 15.

The north and the south agreed to resume cooperation undertakings in the humanitarian field and exert efforts for the substantial settlement of the issue of separated families and relatives.

Both sides agreed to hold the fifth video meeting of separated families and relatives from March 27 to 29 and the 15th reunion of separated families and relatives at Mt. Kumgang Resort early in May.

They agreed to push ahead with the construction of reunion centers of separated families and relatives as early as possible. In this regard they agreed to arrange a working contact between the Red Cross organizations of both sides at Mt. Kumgang Resort on March 9.

Both sides agreed to hold the 8th North-South Red Cross Talks at Mt. Kumgang Resort from April 10 to 12 to discuss and settle issues of mutual concern including the issue of those who went missing during the war and the persons whose whereabouts are unknown since the war.

The north and the south agreed to boost economic cooperation for the progress and prosperity common to the nation. Both sides agreed to hold the 13th meeting of the North-South Committee for the Promotion of Economic Cooperation in Pyongyang from April 18 to 21 for the purpose of seeking a negotiated solution to all the issues arising in the field. Both sides agreed to have the trial operation of a train within the first half of this year depending on the provision of a military guarantee.

They agreed to hold a contact between members of the above-said committee in Kaesong from March 14 to 15.

Both sides agreed to reenergize the construction of the Kaesong Industrial Zone and take necessary measures.

The north and the south agreed to hold the 21st North-South Ministerial Talks in Seoul from May 29 to June 1.

Source: Korean Central News Agency (KCNA)