

North Korea hands over nuclear documents

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North Korea hands over nuclear documents, Sen Lam with Peter Hayes, ABC, 15 May 2008

The United States has described as "an important first step," the handing over of North Korean documents detailing the country's nuclear programme.

"They will be the first primary materials supplied by the North Koreans as to the operating profile of the reactor since it was fired up in the late '80s early '90s. I think it will be useful for us to know whether they have two bombs worth of plutonium, one of which has been blown up or 12. From a strategic nuclear perspective, one or more is a significant amount, because you can blow up a city with one nuclear weapon. But at the end of the day, what this is really about is actually stopping the production of more plutonium. It doesn't solve the rest of the problem, which is what enrichment capacity, if any do they have, nor does it stop all the other potential disasters that could arise from the North Korean plant, including the export of nuclear knowledge or nuclear material, however improbable that might be. But of those three elements, undoubtedly stopping the production of further plutonium was the most urgent, until we get through the next phases of negotiation and start to actual dismantle and dispose of their actual nuclear weapons."

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