

# Seoul to Offer Electricity as Reward if North Korea Ends Nuclear Work

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BEIJING, July 31 - A planned joint statement from the six-nation talks in Beijing aimed at persuading North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons program will include a South Korean offer to send electricity to North Korea as a reward, the chief American negotiator, Christopher R. Hill, said Sunday.

"The electricity offer of course is in the draft agreement," Mr. Hill said after a day of negotiating the proposed statement.

South Korea's offer to supply two million megawatts of electricity a year to North Korea means that North Korea could "get out of this business" of nuclear activities, including power plants, Mr. Hill said earlier. South Korea "has made a very good electricity plan," he said after meeting on Sunday with the South's chief negotiator, Song Min Soon, and North Korea "has much to work on without talking about nuclear-type things."

Mr. Hill said that on Monday negotiators would consider a second draft of the statement written by the host country, China. He also said the statement would include promises of "economic cooperation" if North Korea ended its nuclear programs.

Kent E. Calder, an expert on Northeast Asian energy politics at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University, said the offer "does provide something that's badly needed by North Korea, given its desperate energy situation, but from a South Korean point of view it doesn't compromise Washington." The Bush administration has resisted making direct offers of aid to North Korea.

But some experts said the offer's unbudgeted costs and North Korea's dilapidated power grid might damage its attractiveness at the negotiating table and threaten its viability.

"It was very much a symbolically driven gesture," said Peter Hayes, the executive director of the Nautilus Institute, a research group based in San Francisco that studies North Korea. "It could be a very important long-term project, but in the shorter term it's just not the right project to hand the North Koreans in return for nuclear disarmament."

North Korea said it might rejoin an international nuclear nonproliferation treaty and accept international inspections of its nuclear facilities "if the nuclear issue finds a satisfactory solution" and the United States accepted "peaceful coexistence."