

Bolton meets S Korean, Japanese national security advisers

U.S. President Donald Trump's new national security adviser held talks Thursday with his South Korean and Japanese counterparts, as the U.S. gears up for an unprecedented summit with North Korea.

Bolton met with Chung Eui-yong, the South Korean official who last month conveyed Kim's offer to Trump to talk about "denuclearization" and halt nuclear and missile tests. Chung was then given the unexpected duty of announcing to journalists in the White House driveway Trump's surprise agreement to hold a meeting.

South Korea's president, Moon Jae-in, is due to hold his own summit with Kim on April 27.

Bolton also held talks with Japan's Shotoaro Yachi, whose prime minister, Shinzo Abe, will meet Trump at his Florida resort on Tuesday.

Abe has fostered personal ties with Trump and has been a strong supporter of the U.S.-led campaign of sanctions against North Korea to compel it to negotiate on its nuclear program after a long hiatus in talks.

During his second trip to Mar-a-Lago, Abe will be seeking reassurance that Japan's interests won't be overlooked at the Trump-Kim summit.

The Japanese leader has said he's worried that North Korean security threats to Japan, including short- and medium-range missiles, may not be discussed, and that Trump will focus on intercontinental ballistic missiles that threaten America.

The differing perspectives of the allies, which both host U.S. forces but have sharp historic differences, could complicate Washington's management of policy on North Korea.

A spokesman at the National Security Council said Chung and Yachi are the first national security advisers to meet with Bolton since he took office this week.

Trump on Thursday praised the role of China, currently in a standoff on trade

tariffs with the U.S., in pressuring North Korea. He predicted his meeting with Kim would be “terrific.”

“I think we’re going with a lot of respect, and we’ll see what happens. So we’ve come a long way. But China has really helped us at the border, and we appreciate it,” Trump said at a meeting with governors and senators on trade and agriculture at the White House.

Source: <https://japantoday.com/category/politics/bolton-meets-with-skorea-japan-national-security-advisers>

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