

11 December 2009

# North Korea agrees nuclear 'co-operation' with US



The Yongbyon nuclear facility is the North's key nuclear site

**North Korea says it will continue to co-operate with the US on ending its nuclear programme and agrees that stalled talks need to resume.**

The country's foreign ministry said Pyongyang would work with the US to "narrow remaining differences".

The announcement comes following a visit to Pyongyang by US President Barack Obama's special envoy Stephen Bosworth.

This was the country's first official reaction after three days of talks.

## 'Mutual understandings'

State media quoted a foreign ministry spokesman as saying: "[North Korea] and the United States agreed to continue cooperation in order to narrow remaining differences.

## NUCLEAR CRISIS

**Oct 2006** - North Korea conducts an underground nuclear test

**Feb 2007** - North Korea agrees to close its main nuclear reactor in exchange for fuel aid

**June 2007** - North Korea shuts its main Yongbyon reactor

**June 2008** - North Korea makes its long-awaited declaration of nuclear assets

**Oct 2008** - The US removes North Korea from its list of countries which sponsor terrorism

**Dec 2008** - Pyongyang slows work to dismantle its nuclear programme, after a US decision to suspend energy aid

**April 2009** - Pyongyang launches a rocket carrying what it says is a communications satellite

**25 May 2009** - North Korea conducts a second nuclear test

**5 August 2009** - Former US President Bill Clinton visits to help secure the release of two detained US journalists

**6 October 2009** - North Korea tells China it may be willing to return to six-party talks

"The two sides were able to deepen mutual understanding, narrow differences in views and find considerable common ground.

"A series of mutual understandings were also reached on the need to resume [six party talks]".

Mr Bosworth had earlier described the talks as "useful" but said he did not know when talks would be resumed.

These were the first official discussions between the US and North Korea since Mr Obama took office.

North Korea walked away from six-party nuclear talks earlier this year, but then said it could return.

These discussions - involving the US, China, Russia, Japan and the two Koreas - are aimed at getting rid of the North's nuclear capabilities in return for aid and security guarantees.

North Korea had said it would never again get involved in the talks. But China managed to persuade officials in Pyongyang to consider returning.

The BBC's Michael Bristow says that Mr Bosworth's trip was aimed at showing North Korea the "different future" that awaited it if it rejoined talks and eventually gave up its nuclear ambitions.

Mr Bosworth met several top officials, although not the leader, Kim Jong-il.

Mr Bosworth is now due to fly to Tokyo, Beijing and Moscow to brief officials from the other nations involved in the six-party talks before heading home.