



US-North Korea: What Is Trump Planning? Is a Trump-Kim Meeting Likely?

Keep everyone guessing. That appears to be President Trump's "strategic vision" with regard to his shocking announcement that he expects to meet soon with North Korean communist dictator Kim Jong-un.

President Donald Trump's surprise announcement last week that he would meet with North Korean communist dictator Kim Jong-un stunned observers worldwide, and has been greeted with reactions ranging from praise and cautious optimism to skepticism and alarm. The Korea announcement came just hours after another Trump bombshell rocked the globe: the president's announcement that he would be imposing sweeping tariffs on imported steel and aluminum. While severe critics of the president's tariff decision have warned that the tariffs could initiate global "trade wars," even many of Trump's harshest foes are expressing some measure of relief that prospects of a Kim-Trump summit are a signal of de-escalation of the rhetoric and moves, over the past year, that made it look like we were headed toward a real war — involving, potentially, nuclear-tipped missiles.



However when and where the summit will take place remains unknown, as well as the pre-conditions, if any, that will be set by either side. In fact, it is not a done deal that the summit will actually come off. Kim Jong-un, a miniature tyrant in the murderous mold of Stalin and Mao, has been engaged in a war of words with President Trump for months, punctuated by occasional missile launches and threats by the North Korean regime.

Kim Jong-un's state-run media even called President Trump a "hideous criminal" and threatened him with death last year. That was in response to Trump's comments during his five-nation Asia tour in 2017, during which he referred to Kim as "short and fat" and called his regime a "cruel dictatorship."

An editorial in the ruling Communist Party newspaper *Rodong Sinmun* condemned President Trump to death for insulting Kim, whose cult of personality accords him near-divine status. "The worst crime for which he can never be pardoned is that he dared [to] malignantly hurt the dignity of the supreme leadership," the editorial declared. "He should know that he is just a hideous criminal sentenced to



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on March 13, 2018

death by the Korean people," it warned.

However, when it comes to Kim and North Korea, "never" doesn't mean never. President Trump, it seems, has been pardoned after all. The Hermit Kingdom's plump potentate, who is known for being as unpredictable as Donald Trump, has apparently reconsidered the death sentence and has decided instead to meet with the U.S. president. Kim, who is a global pariah, reportedly craves respect and legitimization from the world community. He is likely only to achieve any progress in that direction that by patching up things with Trump.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said, on March 8, that President Trump "will accept the invitation to meet with Kim Jong-un at a place and time to be determined." She noted, though, that, "in the meantime, all sanctions and maximum pressure must remain."

"We will see if Pyongyang's message today, that it is willing to hold talks, represents the first steps along the path to denuclearization," Sanders said. "In the meantime, the United States and the world must continue to make clear that North Korea's nuclear and missile programs are a dead end."

In a March 8 comment, President Trump tweeted:

Kim Jong Un talked about denuclearization with the South Korean Representatives, not just a freeze. Also, no missile testing by North Korea during this period of time. Great progress being made but sanctions will remain until an agreement is reached. Meeting being planned!

In a follow-up tweet on March 9, the president stated:

The deal with North Korea is very much in the making and will be, if completed, a very good one for the World. Time and place to be determined.

Kim's invitation was delivered to President Trump by South Korean National Security Director Chung Eui-yong. According to the South Korean envoy, North Korea's Kim "expressed his eagerness to meet President Trump as soon as possible." "President Trump appreciated the briefing and said he would meet Kim Jong Un by May to achieve permanent denuclearization," Chung said.

According to Chung, Kim Jong-un "pledged that North Korea will refrain from any further nuclear missile tests." Chung also credited President Trump's "leadership" and "maximum pressure" for bringing us "to this juncture."

"Rocket Man" and Hamburger Diplomacy

Does President Trump really believe that the murderous, psychologically warped Kim intends to cease the nuclear saber rattling and sincerely pick up the olive branch? Probably not. He has been engaged in a rhetorical war with the "short and fat" dictator since before the 2016 election. During his speech to the United Nations in September 2017, President Trump referred to Kim derisively as the "Little Rocket Man" who was "on a suicide mission," and he warned that the United States would "totally destroy North Korea" if Kim threatens us militarily.

However, even while denouncing the North Korean regime and publicly insulting its "supreme leader," Trump the deal-maker has repeatedly said he is willing to meet and talk with Kim. During a May 2016 interview with Reuters, Trump was asked if he would be willing to meet and talk with Kim Jong-un. "Why not? What is wrong with talking?" Trump was quoted as saying. He said he wanted to talk Kim into giving up his "damned nukes," even if it were unlikely Kim would actually do so. He said he would even invite the North Korean leader to Washington, although he wouldn't accord him full head-of-state dignities. "I won't host a state dinner for him. Same goes for the Chinese and others who rip us off,"



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Trump said. Rather, he said the communist leaders would be served hamburgers — at a conference table.

It is unlikely President Trump actually believes that Kim Jong-un would abide by any disarmament deal he might agree to at the proposed summit. Trump has been unsparingly critical of the all-talk/no-show agreements of past administrations over the last three decades, which have resulted North Korea receiving billions of dollars in aid from America and South Korea, only to renege on its promises. Trump says those days are over.

It could be that President Trump views this as simply a chess move aimed at keeping his domestic enemies off balance by showing that his tough talk/soft talk/big stick is smart diplomacy and yields results that the traditional “experts” have failed to produce. If Kim backs out of the summit or shows up but then subsequently cheats on his commitments, President Trump could still view the endeavor as a “win,” since he would be able to claim that he has gone the extra mile bring about a peaceful outcome with the rogue regime.

China, Russia, and North Korea

Communist China and Russia, the two main powers supporting North Korea, both welcomed a meeting and talks between Trump and Kim.

China’s foreign ministry said it hopes both the United States and North Korea will “show their political courage” in renewing dialog, and pledged its support in the process.

Russian state news agency Tass quoted Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov as saying that the reduction of U.S.-North Korea tensions is “a step in the right direction.”

For at least the past several years, Donald Trump has been severely critical of China’s role in propping up Kim Jong-un’s isolated and horribly repressive regime. In a March 30, 2013 [tweet](#) Trump rightly took China to task, stating:

North Korea is reliant on China. China could solve this problem easily if they wanted to but they have no respect for our leaders.

On April 4, 2013 he [tweeted](#):

North Korea can’t survive, or even eat, without the help of China. China could solve this problem with one phone call — they love taunting us!

Any meeting and/or negotiations with Kim Jong-un should be designed to assure not only that he does not receive gratuitous recognition and benefits, but also that Moscow and Beijing do not reap diplomatic and material rewards for being our “partners” in this process. These “partners” are responsible for keeping the brutal communist tyranny of the Kim dynasty in power for 70 years, and for transforming it into the nuclear threat it is today.

Photo of Donald Trump: [DonaldjTrump.com](#)



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