

Trump Says Summit 'May Not Work Out For June 12' But South Korea's Moon Has 'Every Confidence' In Trump's Deal-Making Ability

WASHINGTON, May 22, 2018 — President Donald Trump on Tuesday told reporters a decision will be made soon on whether to proceed with his planned summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

"We'll soon know," Trump said while answering questions during a West Wing arrival ceremony for South Korean President Moon Jae-in.

During an Oval Office meeting with Moon shortly after, Trump said "we'll see what happens," but added that talks between the two countries are "moving along."

A moment later, however, he appeared to balance his desire to have an air of confidence with the reality of the situation.

"If it doesn't happen, maybe it will happen later," he said.

"You never know about deals....I've made a lot of deals. You never really know," Trump continued. "It may not work out for June 12."

Trump said South Korea, China and Japan are "willing to help....to make North Korea great," but he also appeared to blame China for the North's recent change in tone.

"There was a difference when [Kim] left China a second time," he noted.

When Trump asked Moon what he thought of Kim's second meeting, Moon replied that he knows people are skeptical about the summit because it will be "the first time there will be an agreement among the leaders," but added that Trump is "the person who is in charge."

"President Trump has been able to achieve this dramatic change," Moon said, adding further that he has "every confidence" that Trump can negotiate a deal that would bring about an end to the Korean War and deliver "peace and prosperity" for the North.

The summit had been set to take place in Singapore on June 12, but those plans appeared to be in jeopardy last week after the North reacted to suggestions by Trump's national security advisor, former UN Ambassador John Bolton that the United States would seek to have Pyongyang disarm in exchange for sanctions relief in the same manner as deposed Libyan dictator Moammar Gaddafi.

But Trump appeared to back away from Bolton's comments by suggesting that Kim's government would have American assistance in staying in office if it were to give up its nukes.

"We will guarantee his safety," Trump said, adding that security guarantees had been under discussion "from the beginning," and that a denuclearization deal would leave Kim safe and happy while making his country rich.

"I think that he will be extremely happy if something works out," he said. "If you look 25 years into the future, 50 years into the future, he will be able to look back and be very proud of what he did for North Korea and, actually, for the world. But he will be very proud of what he did for North Korea."

This story has been updated