# US execs delivered message to North Korea

DESMOND BUTLER - Associated Press Writer - Associated Press

U.S. business executives say they told North Korean leaders during a visit to Pyongyang last week that they must give up their nuclear ambitions if they want foreign investment in the isolated country.

The rare unofficial trip by independent U.S. business leaders came at the invitation of the North Korean government. The delegation was led by retired U.S. Air Force General Charles Boyd, the president of Business Executives for National Security. It included former American International Group CEO Maurice "Hank" Greenberg and Ross Perot Jr., chairman of Perot Systems Corp. and son of the former U.S. presidential candidate.

The group met with the head of the North Korean parliament and other officials.

Boyd said in a conference call Tuesday that North Korean officials rejected the business delegation's message.

"They were not at all pleased that we were drawing the direct connection between potential economic engagement with the rest of the world and the resolution of the nuclear issue," he said.

The Dec. 14-17 visit came as the Obama administration is trying to step up engagement with North Korea. The delegation of business executives arrived just days after a three-day trip to North Korea by U.S. Special Envoy Stephen Bosworth. That trip marked the Obama administration's first high-level talks with North Korea.

Bosworth took a letter from U.S. President Barack Obama to Pyongyang in an attempt to bring North Korea back to six-nation talks aimed at its nuclear disarmament.

Both Washington and Pyongyang agreed during Bosworth's trip on the need to resume negotiations, but North Korea made no firm commitment about when it would rejoin them.

The negotiations, which began in late 2003, also include China, Japan, Russia and South Korea. They are aimed at getting North Korea to dismantle its nuclear programs in exchange for economic aid and political concessions.

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