

Key allies back decision to suspend oil deliver to North Korea for secret nuclear program

NEW YORK (AP) - Key U.S. allies late Thursday backed a Bush administration decision to suspend oil deliveries to North Korea as punishment for its secret nuclear program.

The decision was announced after a day-long meeting of the four parties that operate the 8-year-old oil assistance program - Japan, South Korea, the European Union and the United States.

The allies coupled the suspension with a condemnation of North Korea for violating a 1994 agreement with the United States and its treaty obligations to remain nuclear-free. They also warned that North Korea's future relations with the four parties "hinge on the complete and permanent elimination of its nuclear weapons program."

President Bush made the decision to suspend oil shipments Wednesday night, ahead of Thursday's meeting of the four members of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization, known as KEDO, which runs the program.

A statement from KEDO's executive board said the suspension would begin with the December shipment and future shipments will depend on North Korea's concrete and credible actions to dismantle completely its highly enriched uranium program.

'In this light, other KEDO activities with North Korea will be reviewed," said the statement read by South Korean Ambassador Sun-Sup Chang, who chairs the board.

administration officials celebrated their allies' agreement to "condemn" the North Koreans outright and unequivocally demand immediate elimination -- "not steps to begin elimination," noted one of the officials -Pyongyang's nuclear program.

The officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, also underscored the KEDO member countries' threat to cancel other interaction beyond the oil program, including economic aid and construction projects.

KEDO was founded after North Korea signed an agreement with the United States in 1994 pledging to become a nuclear weapons-free state. In exchange, the United

At the White House, senior States promised to provide more than 500,000 tons of

heavy oil per year. In ad South Korea and Japano to pay most of the cost for light water nuclear real that are of limited use country intent on devi nuclear weapons. The that project is unknown Bush decided to suga

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Fríday, November 15th 8 PM in Rudder Auditorium Tickets at MSC Box Office

