

India, US to hold talks on details of nuclear cooperation deal

There's a long way to go before agreement. Look at the last paragraph.

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Diplomats from India and the US will begin negotiating today details of their previously announced nuclear cooperation deal, officials said.

The deal will give India access to long-denied civilian nuclear technology in return for placing a majority of its nuclear reactors under international inspection.

The deal was reached in March but the specifics of the plan still have to be hammered out.

'This is the first official negotiation on the bilateral agreement,' US embassy spokesman David Kennedy told Agence France-Press.

'There have been a couple of early drafts exchanged back and forth but this is the first time the two negotiating teams are sitting down in formal talks,' Kennedy said.

A team from the US State and Energy departments and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission arrived in New Delhi yesterday for three days of talks, Kennedy said.

This week, both countries will try and work out differences over a provision that bars New Delhi from conducting atomic tests, officials said.

New Delhi has objected to a condition giving the US the legal right to halt cooperation if India tests a nuclear weapon.