

## **ABSTRACT**

### **The Quest for an Effective North Korea Strategy**

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Two decades of negotiation between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and its neighbors the Republic of Korea, Japan, China and Russia plus the United States have failed to yield any durable solutions to the problems that plague the long divided Korean Peninsula. South-North Korea dialogue, bilateral Japan-DPRK and US-DPRK negotiations plus Chinese hosted Six Party Talks have not yielded durable South-North Korea reconciliation and an end the DPRK's development of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Conventional wisdom argues that Pyongyang is responsible for this failure because it has broken the agreements that these negotiations achieved. But vacillation and disagreement with the United States government and with its allies South Korea and Japan have also contributed to this failure. North Korea's decision in early 2009 to accent weapons' development over negotiations confronts the concerned parties with a dilemma: either destroy the Kim Jong Il regime or forge a more effective diplomatic approach. Two realities compel a single rational choice. No nation in Northeast Asia wants a second Korean War because the human and economic cost would be catastrophic. The sole remaining option is for the United States, Japan and South Korea to adopt a strategy toward North Korea similar to the United States' "engagement" policy toward China beginning in 1972 and the Soviet Union subsequently. This would require shifting the ultimate goal from disarming North Korea to integrating it into international society to make it a less hostile and more open society as has been the case with China and Russia.