

## Preface

This volume is a collection of papers from experts who gathered for an international conference on “North Korea’s Nuclear Issues: Toward Peace and Stability,” in Tokyo in December 2007. The conference was the tenth annual symposium hosted by the National Institute for Defense Studies, the Ministry of Defense, Japan. Distinguished experts and scholars discussed the strengths and limitations of the Six-Party Talks arrangement from the viewpoints of the United States, Korea, China, Russia and Japan. The multi-faceted nature of the issues reflected in respective states’ national security strategies were explored.

We are at a critical crossroad in dealing with North Korea’s nuclear issues. Among the challenges we face are the questions of how North Korea’s disarmament of its nuclear facilities can be implemented; how the member states of the Six-Party Talks can find a common ground; how North Korea’s bilateral relations, especially those with the United States, Japan, and South Korea, can be coordinated; and how we can effectively provide Pyongyang with economic and energy assistance. If the five members of the Six-Party Talks – the United States, Japan, China, Russia and South Korea – are driven by their own self-interests regarding pursuing policies of assistance or deterrence with North Korea, can we resolve the nuclear issues?

At this critical juncture, evaluation of current approaches to North Korea’s nuclear issues in the light of broader peace and stability in the region is essential. North Korea’s nuclear issues present a military and security challenge to us in the short to medium term. But in the long run, the issues have implications for the future configuration of international relations of Northeast Asia.

We appreciate the six panelists from abroad who contributed insightful papers and Professor Satoshi Morimoto who made valuable comments. All of them stimulated eloquent discussions that led the conference to a great success. We are delighted to publish those papers presented at the conference and it is our hope that this volume would contribute to debate which in turn facilitates building a framework for a peaceful Northeast Asia.

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