



HARVARD Kennedy School

MOSSAVAR-RAHMANI CENTER for Business and Government

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Overholt publishes edited volume on North Korea and the path to peace

William Overholt, a senior research fellow at the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business & Government (M-RCBG) at the Harvard Kennedy School, has announced a forthcoming book, *North Korea: Peace? Nuclear War?*, that provides fresh views by leading experts of the Korean nuclear crisis, how it might be solved, and the exceptional difficulties of any solution. The experts represent all viewpoints, parties, and countries involved (except North Korea itself) and have conflicting viewpoints on many issues. They agree that instant denuclearization of North Korea is impossible. The book does, however, show that there is a path to peace.

According to Overholt, who edited the volume, “Most commentary on the summit negotiations assumes that past erratic North Korean behavior prefigures Kim Jong Un’s future behavior. This creates misleading conclusions. Kim Jong Un has a different education, a different life horizon, a different economic situation, a different social environment and a different international context,” he said. “Although his reforms still mainly comprise allowing markets to function despite being technically illegal, all aspects of the economy show visible improvement. Experience elsewhere in Asia shows that economic success is addictive. It improves political support, provides resources for internal and external security, and becomes universally expected.”

North Korea: Peace? Nuclear War? is sponsored by three research centers at Harvard, including M-RCBG, the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, and the Korea Institute. Overholt was involved in the earliest non-proliferation efforts in Asia, including curtailing the South Korea nuclear program. He published the first book on nuclear proliferation and nuclear strategy in Asia, titled *Asia’s Nuclear Future* (1976). The co-authors’ views are diverse and some contradict aspects of the Editor’s overview. Hard copies of the book will become available in April. It is endorsed by leading national security experts, including William Perry, former U.S. Secretary of Defense, and Gregory Treverton, former Chairman of the U.S. National Intelligence Council. The book’s sponsorship does not imply endorsement of any opinions.

A pre-publication text of the book is temporarily available on the M-RCBG website and on Overholt’s personal website:

<https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/mrcbg/publications/books>

<http://www.theoverholtgroup.com/media/Articles-Korea/Korea-Peace-or-Nuclear-War.pdf>