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**The Russian Response to the North Korean Nuclear Crisis: Debates and Decisions**

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**Abstract**

After the second crisis over North Korea's nuclear proliferation erupted, in August 2003 Russia for the first time joined a multinational conference on North Korea's nuclear issue. This restored its voice in Korean affairs. After the acute disappointment at being marginalized in the first nuclear crisis, officials under Boris Yeltsin again sought to raise Russia's profile on the peninsula from the mid-90s. The move to balance relations with the two Koreas culminated in President Vladimir Putin's framework of improving relations both with the DPRK (North Korea) and the ROK (South Korea), while intensifying collaborative actions regarding Korea with other international players – the United States, China, and Japan. Explaining how this framework is operating, this paper examines Russian contributions at the six-party talks and views on the North Korean nuclear issue.