

Institute for Korean Studies Lecture Series

# The Trump Administration's Nuclear Negotiations with North Korea

2020-2021

**IKS**  
LECTURE  
SERIES

Wednesday, February 3

3:30-5:00 pm EST

Online



**Robert Kelly**  
Pusan National University

The years 2017–2020 have been remarkable in the long stand-off with North Korea, as much for the drama of war-threats and then summits, as for the durability of the inter-Korean status quo. Indeed, given all the excitement of both hawkish and then dovish approaches to North Korea since 2017, the greatest surprise is how little both alternatives have accomplished ‘on the ground.’ Much of the failure to change anything is laid at the feet of US President Trump – his poor grasp of the issues, his curious personalism with dictator Kim Jong Un, his focus on media attention – but there are likely other reasons: weak domestic coalitions in both the US and South Korea for major policy change regarding the North, and the enormous structural utility of nuclear weapons to a small, loathed state like North Korea. This talk will cover North Korea’s acquisition of nuclear weapons, the course of the negotiations conducted by both Trump and South Korean President Moon Jae-In, what the two sides seek from the negotiations, why these concessions were almost certainly too great for either side to make, and what a future course of smaller, more workable deals might look like.

Please register for this event on our website:

<https://easc.osu.edu/events/iks/rkelly>



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