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East Asia Expert Available To Discuss Politics Of Party Elites In North Korea And China

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Chris Reardon, associate professor of political science at the University of New Hampshire, is available to discuss the politics of party elites in North Korea, China and other East Asia countries in light of the nuclear standoff involving North Korea. Reardon is an expert in Chinese foreign economic policy, with special emphasis on elite politics and development strategies.

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"Current pundits fail to appreciate Kim Jong-il's overall motivations and timing of the nuclear tests. Over the weekend, Asians celebrated the Mid-Autumn Festival, which for the Koreans in particular is a time to honor one's ancestors. For North Koreans, Kim Jong-il's timing was clear: he was honoring his father Kim Il-sung, and attempting to fulfill his father's last desire before his death in 1994: to bring an end to the Korean conflict by entering into bilateral discussions with the United States," Reardon says.

"Current pundits also fail to appreciate the major change in the Chinese position vis-à-vis the Korean nuclear issue. By agreeing to support UN sanctions against North Korea, China is demonstrating its limited influence on North Korean internal affairs and its greater fear of the rearmament of Japan," he says.

Reardon's current research focuses on the elite strategies in opening China's economy to the outside world in the 1980s. He has published *The Reluctant Dragon: Crisis Cycles in Chinese Foreign Economic Policy*, and translated two volumes of Chinese foreign economic policy documents. He is a research associate at the John King Fairbanks Center for East Asian Studies at Harvard University and coordinator of Asian Studies at the University of New Hampshire. He is fluent in Mandarin Chinese.