

# U.S. **R**elations & North **K**orea

*In his 2002 state of the union address, President Bush unveiled his doctrine on good and evil, unraveling recent efforts to achieve peace and reconciliation in the Korean peninsula. The 1950 Korean War ended without the signing of a peace treaty; creating the seeds for tensions and hostilities between North Korea and the U.S. for now more than 50 years.*

In October, 2000, North Korea and the U.S. released a 'Joint Communique' for the first time, stating there was no more hostile intent toward the other and confirmed the commitment of both governments to make every effort in the future to build a new relationship free from past enmity. The two nations also reaffirmed their relations should be based on the principles of respect for each other's sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and noted the value of regular diplomatic contacts, bilaterally and in broader fora. More importantly the U.S. and N.K have decided to take steps to fundamentally improve their bilateral relations in the interests of enhancing peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region.

The ushering in of the Bush administration literally turned back the 'peace-time-clock' to that of the Cold War era. Today, the U.S. is engaged in the War on Terrorism, deepening the divide further. North Korea has been described by the Bush administration on various occasions as a threat, not trustworthy, a failed regime, and part of the axis of evil.

## *S h o u l d*

*the U.S. Seek a Peaceful Policy Approach?*

**North Korea is making significant efforts to normalize relations with the world.**

In 1998, North Korea opened its doors to the South Korean public allowing more than 420,000 tourists, to date, to visit Mount KeumKang. Following the disastrous floods of 1995, the nation also permitted numerous international aid groups such as the United Nations' World Food Programme to set up offices and monitor food aid distribution to its people.

In the last two years, North Korea has established diplomatic relations with thirteen European Union nations. North Korea also normalized relations with 19 of the 21 countries that participated in the U.S.-led UN forces in the Korean War. Only the U.S. and France have failed to establish diplomatic relations with North Korea.

Most significantly, on June 15, 2000, North Korean and South Korean leaders met for the first time since the Korean War and pledged to work towards reconciliation and peaceful relations. South Korean president Kim Dae Jung promised that there would be no more war, upon his return from this historic visit.