

South Korea's Presidential Elections and the Korean Peace Movement

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Prospects for Peace in Korea in 2022

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Overview

1. 2022 South Korean Presidential elections
2. Failure of Washington's North Korea Policy
3. Democratic Party (liberal) vs. People Power Party (conservative)
4. Lee's proactive engagement vs. Yoon's pre-emptive aggression
5. The US anti-China campaign and the Korean peninsula
6. Alternative: mass movement to prevent nuclear conflict

2022 South Korean Presidential Elections

1. Right-wing support based largely on “North Korean threat”
2. Conservative victory would raise inter-Korean tensions
3. Liberal win would enhance opportunities for peace
4. US emphasis on China-North Korea containment will severely constrain any new South Korean administration

Failure of Washington's North Korea Strategy

- Maximum pressure and sanctions
 - The North has advanced its nuclear capabilities regardless
- US-DPRK negotiations under Trump
- The “Korean Tragedy”
 - The South continues to subordinate security and self-determination to the US
- Pyongyang's self-imposed moratorium on ICBM, nuke tests
- US containment policy as the main roadblock to rapprochement





더불어민주당

Lee Jae-myung

국민의힘



Yoon Suk-yeol



우리가 언론사가 되어야 합니다.



우리가 소식을 전하고 우리의 진실을 알리고,
저들의 잘못을 우리의 카톡으로, 우리의 텔레방으로,
커뮤니티에 열심히 글을 열심히 써서
언론이 묵살하는 진실을 알리고, 왜곡된 정보를 고칩시다.

여러분, 이가 없으면 잇몸으로 하는 겁니다.

세상이 잘못되어 가면 우리 손으로 고치면 됩니다.

여러분과 함께 확실하게 더 새로운 나라, 오늘보다 내일이 더 기대되는 나라,
청년들이 친구와 적이 될 정도로 전쟁이 아니라 협력하며 도전할 수 있는

희망 넘치는 나라. 기회 넘치는 나라.

여러분과 함께 꼭 만들도록 하겠습니다. 고맙습니다.

-부산 BIFF 광장에서 이재명 더불어민주당 대선후보-



상대적 박탈감



Lee Jae-myung

- Pursuing national interest-focused pragmatism
- Seeking to play driver's role between US, North Korea
- Engaging in balanced diplomacy in US-China rivalry
- Taking two-way approach toward Japan



Yoon Suk-yeol

- Enhancing ROK-US comprehensive strategic alliance
- Expanding extended deterrence against North Korea
- Seeking policies to open and reform North Korea
- Sharing values and interests and creating mutual trust with Japan

Democratic Party vs. People Power Party

Lee Jae-myung

- Supports reviving Kaesong Complex, Kumgang tourism, and Inter-Korean railway
- Supports lifting sanctions on the North
- Refrains from taking sides between Washington and Beijing
- Opposes joint ROK-US-Japan military alliance
- Supports End of War declaration

Yoon Suk-yeol

- Wants to contain North Korea
- Supports preemptive strike against North
- Favors deploying US nukes in the South and/or a nuke-sharing deal with Washington
- Supports more US THAAD missile batteries
- Opposes End of War declaration

한반도 종전선언 획기적인 남북관계 발전의 전환점입니다

2021.09.23. facebook



문재인 대통령이 UN 총회 기조연설에서 강조한 '한반도 종전선언'을 환영합니다.

한반도 비핵화와 평화체제 구축은 민주정부 역사의 가장 큰 줄기입니다.

종전선언이 실행되면 한반도 리스크는 사라지고, 남북간 협력의 시너지는 한층 높아질 수 있습니다.

종전선언이 대화의 입구라면 한반도 비핵화와 평화체제 구축은 대화의 최종 출구입니다.

문재인 대통령의 노력이 성과가 날 수 있도록 적극 협력하겠습니다. 주춧돌을 놓고, 튼튼한 기둥을 세우며, 서까래도 올리겠습니다.

'한반도 평화 구현' 이재명이 하겠습니다.

1 이재명은 합니다
더불어민주당 제20대 대통령 경선후보

Yoon Suk-yeol doubles down on preemptive strike to stop North Korean attack

Conservative presidential candidate says North Korea the 'main enemy' as opponents accuse him of anti-communist populism

[Jeongmin Kim](#) January 17, 2022



Image: Yoon Suk-yeol presidential campaign team | Yoon holding the People Power Party flag

《개금의 방》

《남한노무현》

《남한노무현》

《남한노무현》

양방

양방

평화파괴공약

《동족대결당》

《반통일당》

《북침전쟁당》



정권 교체나 정권 유지냐

단위: %



※중앙일보가 엠브레인퍼블릭에 의뢰해 1월 15~16일 1006명 유·무선 전화
면접 조사(신뢰수준 95%에 표본오차 ±3.1%포인트)

당선 가능성

단위: % ※1월 15~16일 조사, ()안은 2021년 12월 30~31일



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국가 경제를 가장 잘 이끌 것 같은 후보

(단위: %)



Source: The JoongAng

Likely Outcomes

Lee Presidency

- Push for UN sanction waivers to reopen Kaesong Industrial Complex
- Engagement with Pyongyang
- Development of stable China-Russia-DPRK alliance
- Pragmatic US-ROK alliance

Yoon Presidency

- Increased inter-Korean tensions
- Regional destabilization
- Nuclear arms race
- Adverse effect on US goal of nuclear non-proliferation

Views of Progressive Experts

The US security establishment regards tension on the Korean Peninsula as a vital component of its strategy to contain China, and the US would never permit peace in Korea as long as its hegemonic rivalry with China persists....The US is still actively waging war through sanctions and military readiness drills.

Tim Beal

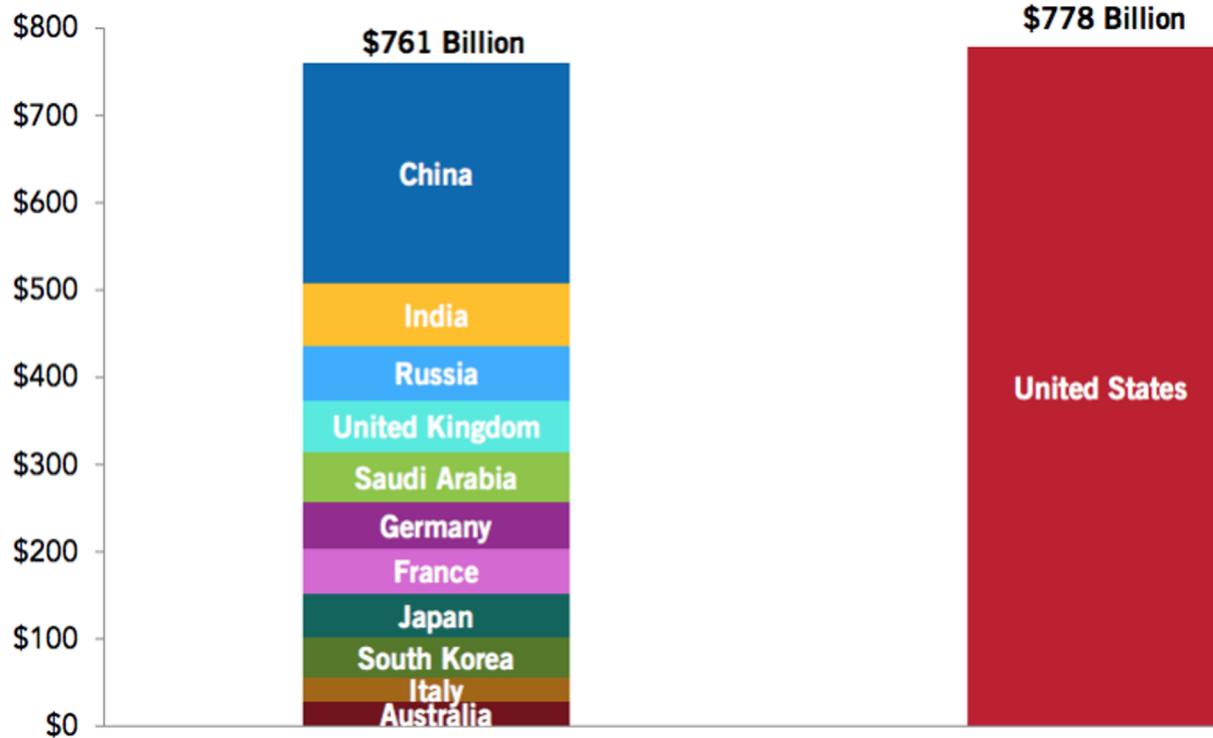
The Biden administration's pivotal foreign policy objective is to coerce Asian nations to join its fanatical anti-China campaign, forcing South Korea to the forefront of a new US-led regional containment coalition.

Gregory Elich

A New Crisis on the Korean Peninsula

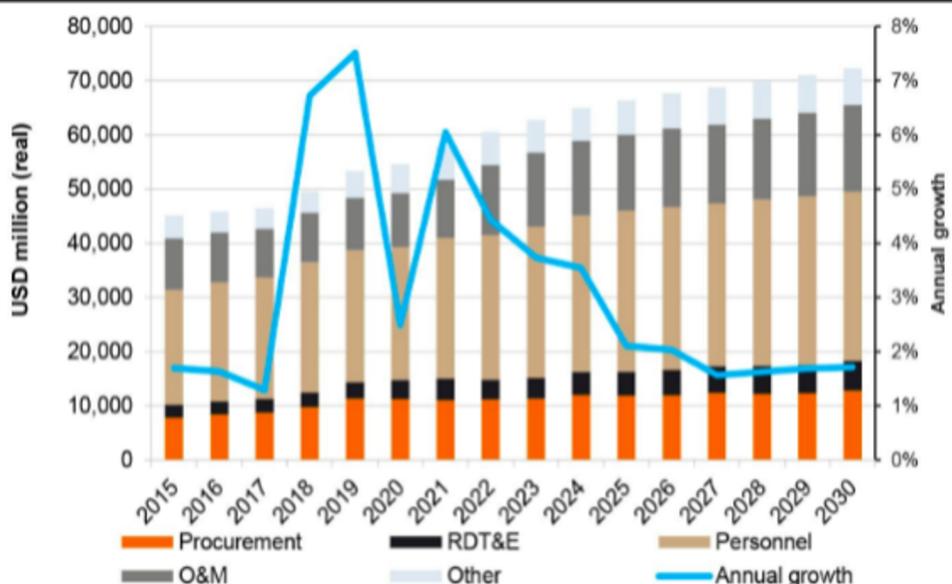
- Escalating China-US strategic rivalry
- Intensifying US military posture in South Korea
 - Pressure on Seoul to join US strategic effort to hem in China
- Increased North Korean nuclear and missile capabilities
 - Pyongyang has not tested nuclear weapons or ICBMs since 2017
 - But it has made progress toward building more advanced weapons
- Dangerous arms race and increased tensions

US Defense Budget



Source: *Peter G. Peterson Foundation*, 2021

South Korea defence budget: 2015-2030



Source: Janes Defence Budgets

© 2021 Janes

South Korea is one of the fastest growing large defence markets in the world, according to

Janes Defence Budgets. (Janes Defence Budgets)

ISSUE
& DATA

S. Korea 3rd-largest importer of US weapons

Importers of US weapons

(Unit: \$ billion)

1	Saudi Arabia	10.63	4	UAE	6.7
2	Australia	7.27	7	Japan	3.75
3	S. Korea	6.73			

Source: 2018 Global Defense Market Yearbook/Yonhap



Alternative: A Comparative Perspective

“How the Cold War Was Really Won”

Historian E. P. Thompson, in an activist role, argued passionately and effectively that citizen-activists could force their governments to disarm and break down the cold war bloc system by mobilizing opposition both to new nuclear weapons and to the cold war more generally.

David Meyer

US-Korean Popular Solidarity for Peace

- Situation in NE Asia today parallels that of early 1980s Europe
 - Fear that US and USSR could fight a “limited” nuclear war
- Possibility of a regional war in NE Asia
 - Without a visible peace movement, a limited war may break out
- Secure a “no first strike” pledge from the US
- Work toward a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula, demilitarization of the economy, Korean reunification and Northeast Asian regional autonomy

The Peace Movement Won the INF Treaty. We Must Fight to Preserve It.

In the 1980s, millions of antinuclear activists took to the streets, forcing Western governments to respond to our demands. We can do the same now.

By David Cortright

NOVEMBER 14, 2018



Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators gather in Central Park in New York City for a nuclear disarmament rally on June 12, 1982. (AP Photo / Ray Stubblebine)



Denuclearize
America too!

Donuclearize
America Too!

NO WAR,
YES PEACE

NO WAR,
YES PEACE!

NO WAR,
YES PEACE!

NO WAR,
YES PEACE

판문점선언
꼭 지지!

NO WAR,
YES PEACE

NO WAR,
YES PEACE

N W

우리 손으로 희망을 꿰다



Photo

종전선언!

앞으로
제대로

나를위해

영민

Conclusion

- A liberal administration will create opportunities for engagement, while a conservative administration will raise tensions.
- Regardless of who takes power in 2022, Biden's policy of containing China and North Korea will significantly constrain policy options for South Korea.
- "US peace activists need a multi-year plan to contest US neo-imperial power on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia."

Thank you!

