

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
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THE US-SOUTH KOREA ALLIANCE AT 70
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UNCORRECTED TRANSCRIPT – CHECK AGAINST RECORDING

WELCOMING REMARKS:

SUZANNE MALONEY
Vice President and Director, Foreign Policy, Brookings

OPENING AND PRE-RECORDED FRAMING REMARKS:

CHOON-GOO KIM
Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the U.S.A.

PHILIP S. GOLDBERG:
United States Ambassador to the Republic of Korea

PANEL DISCUSSION:

MIREYA SOLÍS (Moderator)
Philip Knight Chair in Japan Studies, Senior Fellow and Director, Center for East Asia Policy Studies
Brookings

KATHARINE H.S. MOON
Visiting Professor of Government, Harvard University
Professor Emerita of Political Science, Wellesley College

JUNG H. PAK
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Multilateral Affairs and Deputy Special Representation for
The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), U.S. Department of State

ANDREW YEO
SK-Korea Foundation Chair in Korea Studies and Senior Fellow, Center for East Asia Policy Studies
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CLOSING REMARKS:

MIREYA SOLÍS
Philip Knight Chair in Japan Studies, Senior Fellow and Director, Center for East Asia Policy Studies
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SUZANNE MALONEY: -- for Foreign Policy here at the Brookings Institution. And I'm delighted to welcome you and our distinguished guests to our program today on the U.S.-South Korea alliance at 70. Today's event actually marks two important milestones. The first is the 70th anniversary of the U.S.-South Korea alliance. Since its inception, via the Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953, the alliance has expanded from a primarily defensive one to a wide-ranging partnership built on ensuring economic security and global cooperation in a rules-based order. Amid great power competition in the Indo-Pacific and the threat of North Korea's nuclear ambitions, the alliance has transformed into a comprehensive strategic partnership positioned to address global challenges, including emerging technologies, supply chain resilience, climate change, cybersecurity, sustaining and expanding democratic institutions and values, and much more. We're honored to have participants from both sides of the alliance who will be with us here today to offer their perspectives on the past, present and future of the alliance. We're grateful that Choon-goo Kim, the chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, is able to join us this afternoon to offer to offer initial opening remarks. We will then hear brief framing remarks about the alliance from United States Ambassador to the Republic of Korea Philip S. Goldberg, who prerecorded his contributions on this issue in recognition of the time differences between Seoul and Washington.

The second milestone that I'm very pleased to highlight today is the 2023 marks the 10th year of the establishment of the SK-Korea Foundation chair in Korean studies at Brookings. On that note, we are thrilled to welcome back to Brookings the two talented scholars who were our first two Korea chairs, Visiting Professor of Government at Harvard University and Professor Emerita of Political Science at Wellesley College Katharine Moon, here in our audience. As well as Jung Pak, who serves as deputy assistant secretary of state in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and the deputy representative for North Korea at the State Department. They will be joined on stage by Andrew Yeo, senior fellow and the current holder of our Korea chair. And also by Mireya Solís, who is senior fellow and director of the Center for East Asia Policy Studies here in the Foreign Policy program at Brookings. Together, they'll reflect on these milestones and share additional insights about the U.S.-South Korea alliance prior to the April 26 summit between U.S. President Joe Biden and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol.

A quick reminder that we're live and streaming on the record will preserve the last few moments of our event today for questions from the audience. Microphones will be passed around the room for those here in person who wish to participate in the conversation. And for those who are watching, virtually, you can submit questions by email at events@brookings.edu or via Twitter at the hashtag US ROK Alliance. Another quick note that at the conclusion of the event, I'll ask all those who are here with us in person to remain in your seat so the participants can leave the stage seamlessly. At this time, I'd like to introduce Chargé Kim to the podium for his remarks. Thank you.

CHOON-GOO KIM: Hello, everybody. I'm Choon-goo Kim, as introduced. Choon-goo Kim, chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Washington. I served until two years ago as the consul general in Honolulu. And whenever we start to speak, we start with aloha. But here in Washington, I have to say good afternoon to you, everybody. Well, thank you, Dr. Maloney, vice president of the Brookings Institution, other distinguished guests. It is my pleasure to join you today as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the ROK-U.S. alliance and the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Brookings Institute's Korea chair. I'm delighted to be joined by so many of the former occupants of this distinguished post, including Katharine Moon, professor emeritus at Wellesley College, and Jung Pak, my colleague, the deputy special representative for DPRK. I would also like

to recognize the current Korea chair, Andrew Yeo, for making this event possible. Thank you.

Since first being established in 2014, the Brookings Korea chair has been invaluable in promoting a greater understanding of our bilateral relationship. So to begin, I want to thank you all for your great work in strengthening our alliance and promoting mutual trust. The friendship between Korea and the United States goes back hundreds and 40 plus years. But this year marks the 70th anniversary of our formal alliance. We have been allies half of the time of our friendship. Forged in blood, our alliance has been the foundation of our current prosperity. In the face of the evolving threat posed by North Korea, our alliance stands firm, always demonstrating strength and resolve. What began as a military alliance has expanded to also become an economy alliance. Particularly given the success of KORUS FTA. Over the past decade, the FTA has produced incalculable opportunities for our economic partnership and brought us both unfold benefits. This close partnership is supported by perhaps the most important of all, people to people exchanges. In a recent survey, nearly eight out of ten Koreans chose the United States as the country they felt closest to. Korea pop culture is on the rise in America. Many Americans enjoy Netflix's, Squid Game, BTS music and dance, and even Korean food. While this BTS also includes, is joined by Blackpink the famous girl group.

Given the strong bond of our two countries and with our commitment to advance our shared values of freedom, human rights, and democracy, we have successfully overcome the challenges of our times amid growing uncertainty in the international environment. Distinguished guests, today's event is particularly meaningful as we are only days out, as we are only days away from President Yoon Suk Yeol's state visit, which marks the historic milestone in our alliance. We live in an era of rapid innovation in areas like artificial intelligence and Korean energy technology. We also face many transnational challenges, including climate change and food insecurity. And global uncertainty is growing, growing because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the more sophisticated nuclear and missile threat from North Korea. To meet these challenges together, our alliance's role must be expanded and advanced to become a global, comprehensive strategic alliance. The upcoming summit with the theme of "alliance in action toward the future" will showcase the ever-evolving nature of the alliance and give us the chance to upgrade our alliance even further. We will reaffirm our commitment to advance our shared values. We will encourage our democratic traditions and look for ways to ensure global security and prosperity for the next 70 years and beyond. In response to North Korea's threats, we will enhance and strengthen our extended deterrence, as well as reaffirm our shared goal of the denuclearization of North Korea. In the economic front, we will seek new growth, the enemies -- I'm sorry, engines -- exploring opportunities in areas like cutting edge technology, space, and biotech. And we will also work on how to expand our already strong people-to-people exchange. Distinguished guests, before I close, I would like to mention how important fora like this have been over the years and how appreciated they are at every level. They have helped our governments better align our policies. So I look forward to hearing today's discussions and hope there will give some real insights we prepare for when -- as we prepare for the upcoming visit and summit. Thank you so much.

PHILIP S. GOLDBERG: Hello from Seoul. Thanks, Suzanne, for the opportunity to address this distinguished group of participants and speakers today. I wish I could be there in person. But as you know, we have a very important state visit coming up at the end of April, when President Yoon Suk Yeol will be hosted by President Biden at the White House. And there's a lot of preparation to be done. On today's theme, reinvigorating the U.S. Our alliance at 70. The energy and enthusiasm for the U.S.-ROK alliance remains as

high as ever, and the number of senior level U.S. visitors to Korea reflects this. That's one of the reasons also that I can't be in Washington. We're very busy in preparing and receiving visitors here in Seoul as ambassador here. One of my roles is to nurture and further develop the comprehensive and strategic partnership and to increasingly orient our cooperation toward the future with a focus on broader regional and global issues. It's been invigorating and satisfying to help our bilateral relationship reach new heights.

This October will celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea, which has provided a solid foundation for the people in Korea to flourish in the years following the Korean War. On that foundation, we built an entire network of political, economic, security and social ties to make sure current and future generations of Koreans and Americans enjoyed the opportunities that they do. I anticipate these people-to-people ties will be highlighted during President Yoon's state visit to Washington in just a couple of weeks. During the visit, President Biden and President Yoon will discuss how the U.S.-ROK alliance is critical to advancing peace, stability and prosperity for our two countries, the Indo-Pacific and the world. They'll highlight the enduring strength of the iron clad U.S.-ROK alliance and the United States' unwavering commitment to this country. The presidents will discuss our shared resolve to deepen and broaden our political, economic security and people to people ties.

The presidents will also discuss specific measures to strengthen economic security, furthering the advances made since their summit last May to deepen and broaden cooperation on critical and emerging technologies through the launch of an economic security dialogue. We've made great progress on working together to diversify supply chains for both essential goods and the materials needed to make them. We've accomplished, through initiatives like the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework and the Minerals Security Partnership, while at the same time mitigating the impacts of climate change and enhancing economic security for countries throughout the region. Another opportunity to advance our cooperation is through the IOC's newly unveiled ambitious Indo-Pacific strategy, which called to strengthen solidarity with like-minded partners and to promote shared values such as democracy, human rights and free economies. We fully support the ROK in expanding its global role and fulfilling its aspirations as a global pivotal state, which aligns with our own commitment to strengthen cooperation with Southeast Asian and Pacific Island countries and promote sustainable development, energy security and high-quality transparent investment, including in infrastructure.

During recent summits, we've reaffirmed our support for peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, as this is essential for security and cooperation in the region. We thank the ROK for its humanitarian assistance and commitment to the reconstruction of Ukraine. We also discussed our ways to help Ukraine as Russia has continued its brutal invasion for more than a year. We welcome President Yoon's bold action to improve bilateral relations with Japan, the ROK's geographically closest likeminded partner. President Yoon took a crucial step in strengthening our trilateral cooperation. The ROK is also taking on an increasing leadership role as a champion of democracy in the region and globally, demonstrated last month when it co-hosted, along with the United States, the Summit for Democracy, and as it takes on the role of sole host next year.

It's an exciting time in the U.S.-ROK bilateral relationship. The depth and breadth of our relationship is astounding. As we confront a host of global threats, the United States and the ROK will only deepen our ties and strengthen our resolve. As I said at the outset, this bilateral relationship is already dynamic and full of energy. It certainly keeps me going every day. I congratulate the Brookings Institution on its 10th anniversary of the

establishment of the Korea chair. Your contributions in supporting the alliance and elevating the level of discourse on critical issues in U.S. foreign policy is invaluable. I'm sure you'll have continued success, because we're going to continue improving this relationship. Thank you again for the opportunity to address this impressive group of participants today. Thanks very much. [Speaking Korean].

MIREYA SOLÍS: Good afternoon, everyone. It's such a pleasure for me to moderate this afternoon's conversation. It is, of course, an important year. We're marking the 70th anniversary of the U.S.-ROK alliance, and also for Brookings is a very special time as we are also celebrating the 10th year anniversary of the SK-Korea Foundation chair. And it's timely because we're expecting President Yoon to come for a state visit at the end of the month. So clearly, this is an important occasion and the timing could not be better.

But I also would like to highlight that we are really in for quite a treat because we have some of the best experts on U.S.-South Korea relations here at the stage. They happen to all be former colleagues or current colleagues. So to me, this is a special pleasure and I know that they've been introduced. But I want to tell you a little bit more about the biography, because I think that when I do that, you'll see how accomplished they are each individually, but also when you see them here together in the stage, you begin to see the range and the depth of expertise that we have been so fortunate here at Brookings to have when it comes to Korea studies. So let me start with Kathy Moon, who was the inaugural chair, and now currently she's the Kim Koo visiting professor at Harvard and professor emerita at Wellesley College. And Kathy is, of course, very well-established academic who has written really remarkable work looking at the influence of Korea's democratization on the U.S.-ROK alliance and the impact of American bases in local communities. And her current book project is on North Korean narratives, and I believe Kathy is doing extensive interviews also with the North Korean diaspora. Next to her in the center is Jung Pak, who is deputy assistant secretary for multilateral affairs and deputy special representative for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. And of course, prior to arriving at State, Jung was a very dear colleague of ours here at Brookings, and during her time she wrote what I think is probably one of our best-sellers, "Becoming Kim Jong Un." And before that I remember very well, Jung, the essay that you wrote that became really everybody was paying attention because their insights were really extraordinary. And of course, Jung also has a distinguished career in the intelligence community, both at the CIA and at the National Intelligence Council. And Andrew next to me is a current holder of the chair and is also professor at Catholic University. Andrew, the way I would describe him, in addition to being a wonderful colleague, is that he has such a broad range of interests. Let me just tell you about some of the issues that he's been working on recently. For example, a recent book on state on the state and markets in North Korea. He's also doing a lot of work on South Korea's Indo-Pacific strategy. He has published a book in the past on the emerging security architecture. He has a recent project on great power competition and overseas basing. And currently, I think that Andrew's getting started on a project on grand narrative, grand strategy narratives. So you'll begin to see then from how many different areas we can begin to talk about the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

Now, now that I've introduced you, I would like to give you the floor and probably I'll start with Kathy. And if we can go, then coming towards me. And I like to ask you to start with some opening remarks and offer, if I can ask a reflection on where you see the U.S. South Korea relationship today, how would you describe where we're at, how we got here? What are the opportunities, the challenges, where you want to take it? I think this would be a very good way to frame the discussion that will follow. So, Kathy, please go ahead.

KATHARINE H.S. MOON: Thanks very much, Mireya. It is wonderful to be back. Brookings is very much a family in the best sense that you can always come back and be welcomed so warmly. And I'm very grateful to Andrew for this panel and for the Brookings staff who make it possible also. Thanks. Of course, I'm sure all of you would agree to ask and the Korea Foundation for having endowed the Korea chair back about ten years ago. I began my post here at Brookings in 2014 when Barack Obama was president, remember, way back then. And the so-called strategic patience approach to North Korea was in play in South Korea Park Geun-hye was president and she was pursuing a new approach to North Korea called trust politique. She also sought to reshape domestic Korean society its view of unification from a negative one to a positive one. Some of you may remember the term bonanza unification bonanza. I think many have forgotten this already, and it hasn't been that long.

Back then, in 2014, when I started, Kim Jong Un was a newcomer to the world stage and we all were getting to know him as he assumed the primary primary leadership role after three years of official mourning for his father, who had died in 2011. Many had wondered back then if the young and inexperienced heir had the skills and drive to maintain and wield power. I remember in the fall of 2014 when he had been absent from public view for nearly 40 days, the global media and many Korea watchers wondered if he was ill, if he had died, if there had been a coup to remove him. That is to say that his hold on power seemed precarious at that time. Today, about ten years later, Mr. Obama and Ms. Park are no longer in office. But Mr. Kim is very much there and he has been firmly ensconced, as you all know. And I have to say, sadly, that his regime, although not his people, has thrived in terms of nuclear capabilities and delivery vehicles. In 2013, there had been eight launches by North Korea of short range missiles. Compare that with 2020 to less than ten years, with over 90 missiles of varied types and much more sophistication. We know that there was a launch just yesterday for us, I guess today for Korea.

Also, the regime has thrived in terms of cyber attacks. I remember back in 2014 and the world had been surprised by the North's ability to hack into Sony Pictures. You remember that some of you are nodding Sony Pictures because of a movie that the North Korean regime did not like that the Americans had put out and Americans and many around the world were surprised. Do the North Koreans have the ability to do this? Well, 2022 was not only a record breaking year in terms of missile launches, but also for stealing foreign assets through cyber attacks and attacking foreign aerospace and defense companies.

The regime has also thrived in the last ten years in terms of getting away with human rights violations, with much less international scrutiny. In 2014, you might recall that the DPRK was under international scrutiny, led by the United Nations with a highly critical commission report about its human rights abuses. The General Assembly had voted to condemn human rights abuses based on that report, and even the Security Council, the UN Security Council decided to convene to address North Korean human rights abuses. In the last 9 to 10 years, we have experienced democratic regression and explicit efforts to establish autocracies around the world. It is an environment friendlier, you might say, to North the North Korean regime than what existed ten years ago. Pyongyang's relations with Moscow and with Beijing today, and these are countries that, as you know, do not press for democracy or for human rights. Their relationships are closer than they were ten years ago. And North Korean society is more closed today than it was ten years ago, partly due to the pandemic shut down of its borders. Things might be looking grim, and I apologize for this unhappy account, but I have to also say that the U.S. are okay. Relationship is in better shape now than it was ten years ago, although it has more challenging issues, including the fact that 70 to 80% of the Korean public, depending on

the survey, supports a nuclear weapons program for the Korean society. And there are, of course, pressures for Korea and the U.S. to join together ever more tightly in terms of economic and technological alliances in addition to the Security alliance. So I look forward to exchanging views about the evolving nature of the U.S. Korea relationship. And I now turn to my colleague and fellow chair and now DAS, Jung.

JUNG PAK: Thank you, Kathy. And thank you, Mireya. Thank you, Andrew. And thanks to Brookings for hosting. It's always great going after Kathy Moon because that cuts off half of my remarks because Kathy is so such a brilliant academic, somebody that I've admired for for the several past several decades. You know, Kathy mentioned how things have changed over the past ten years. But I think one thing that remains constant has been that the alliance, the U.S.-ROK alliance has been the linchpin of peace, security and prosperity for Northeast Asia and the broader Indo-Pacific. I say that with a lot of confidence, and I have numbers I have we so far we've seen two two bilateral meetings between the leaders and three and and two trilateral meetings among the leaders with ROK, U.S. and Japan. We've had multiple the secretary has had many engagements with his ROK and Japan counterparts bilaterally and trilateral. We are deputy secretary, has quarterly meetings and calls with her counterparts in Korea and Japan and of course, the special representative, Ambassador Sung Kim for the special representative for the DPRK. Ambassador Sung Kim is is also in near constant touch as as I am with ROK and Japanese counterparts. So so we've had a banner several years of coordination and cooperation, and I'm really proud to be working on the state visit of President Yoon later this month. And so, you know, and I also want to point out, you know, I did some digging just what happened ten years ago, as you did, Kathy. But what I came back to was your inaugural speech. And in that inaugural speech, when you took the chair here, you talked about globalizing and democratizing, but you also talked about NexGen. And I think one of the things that I tried to carry on after you was the next generation. I remember that you said that you didn't study Korea because there were no Korea studies and that you were actually a China expert and you studied China and that you saw this platform as a way to teach about Korea. And I think that's something that's, you know, that remains. It's it was a powerful message for those who came after you. And I think I think this celebration of the alliance and for the ten years of the Brookings chair, I think is really the foundation of what you laid ten years ago. So thank you for that. But I also mentioned that you mentioned the globalizing aspect and the democratizing aspect of U.S. ROK relations and DPRK. I think that's true now more than ever. Ambassador Goldberg, whom you whom you saw just now, is one of the hardest working diplomats that I've that I've ever seen. And he's been very busy, not with, you know, not just with the state visit, but also the steady drumbeat of visits and meetings that we've had with the Republic of Korea in the past two years in this administration. So we're really happy about that. I'll also mention that in terms of globalizing, you know, in my bio, I'm the deputy assistant secretary for multilateral affairs as well. That includes ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, as well as in all of the permutations that are involved with ASEAN, as well as the Mekong U.S. Partnership. And in those capacities, I see what we're doing with Korea, with the Pacific Island countries, what we're working on to ensure the centrality of ASEAN to the the coincidence or the convergence of our respective Indo-Pacific strategies that in which we're both working to make sure that the Indo-Pacific is free, resilient and secure and prosperous. You know, and and I'm really, you know, I think on the people to people ties my my colleague from the Rock embassy talked about that eight out of ten Koreans prefer to study in the United States or prefer or see the United States as their greatest friend. All I'll point out that since 1955, there have been 1.7 million Koreans who have studied in the United States. And I think that, you know, it's it's just a testament to the that the diplomacy and this relationship didn't appear out of nowhere, but that it took decades to build and it

will take decades to continue to build. And so it's a process rather than a destination. So I'm really and I'm privileged to be working towards that at the State Department. Couple of words on DPRK. Kathy's already mentioned the cyber peace and the human rights. And those were the two things that I was going to highlight as well. You know, and I think that we saw this evolution of the cyberthreat from the DPRK coming. I remember in 2013, before the Sony hack, the the rock banks and TV stations were hacked. And then the Sony hack came in 2014. I was working in the intelligence community at the time. So so we've seen that evolution to the extent that and we in the in the U.S. government were working hard at combating these malign cyber activities by the DPRK. And as you may know, I co-host or the U.S. ROK Cyber Working Group to to counter these efforts. Second is the human rights. Not much has changed. And one could argue that it's gotten worse because of the COVID lockdown and the puckering up of the DPRK during the COVID pandemic. And we'll continue to focus on that. The administration has been very much focused on keeping human rights at the center of our policies. You know, in the and just finally, the challenges are great. I think what we've seen in the past three years is that we can't we're not just talking about military issues anymore. The issues are the are challenges are in the gray zone. Our challenges are in real nuclear proliferation threats. Our challenges are posed by things transnational issues such as the climate crisis, which I know from the ASEAN context. It affects ASEAN Southeast Asia deeply, the energy security issues and food security issues that have been exacerbated by Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine, as well as the strategic relationship that has been building between the PRC and Russia. And so given these challenges, we are extremely grateful and and not we have much work to do ahead between the U.S. and ROK, as well as our other allies and partners in the region. So with that, let me just stop there. Thanks.

ANDREW YEO: All right. Well, thanks so much. And I'm as the current ASC Career Foundation shareholder, I'm extremely honored to share the stage with my predecessors, both Kathy and Jung. Kathy, I also remember when you were here at the inaugural launching of the Korea chair position, and I was actually sitting on the right side towards the back to right side stage. It was so vivid. It was it was emotional as well, too. I remember. And. As an admirer of your work and I and as a friend, I was so proud of that moment. And so it's it's really humbling to be back here with you. And then also a Jung, I, I know that I'd come to Brookings a few times. There was a private roundtable that you invited me to. There was a event on Trans Atlantic Trans Pacific Alliances, which it was great. It was this private roundtable. We had a closed door discussion and then there was a public event. I also sat on the right side. I think that's my spot now when I'm not up here on the right back right side of of this auditorium. And I do want to say that after I became the chair, I got a I got contacted by Ramone saying, you still owe us one more conference. So we did complete that. But all this to say that I feel very much connected to you, but I'm also indebted to both of you and what you had done and what what you had already established here at Brookings. And certainly the point about fostering a next generation that is in my blood, I feel like and I, you know, as a as a professor and as an academic, I mean, that's something that I'm I'm trying to do as well. So I'm glad that we have that continuity. But on the topic for today, of course, we're talking about the alliance. And, you know, overall, the alliance is in it's in it's on solid footing. The two governments have been in frequent communication and contact through multiple channels and layers of government. As you pointed out, Jung, if you look at public opinion in the United States and in South Korea and support for the U.S. ROK alliance, they remain very high. Last fall, the Chicago Council on Global Affairs released a survey and we saw record high favorable attitudes towards South Korea from Americans. The score, I think, was 61 out of ten. And this has steadily climbed. And, you know, conversely, on the flip side, for South Korea, 90% of Koreans and this is from a Pew survey, a Pew survey on global attitudes, 90% of

Koreans had favorable attitudes towards United States. So really, the alliance is on on solid, solid footing. So it's in great shape. That being said, of course, we've seen hiccups along the way. We've seen, I think, undercurrents of angst at times. More on the South Korea side. We had the issue of the Inflation Reduction Act last fall, and although I think the two governments are are working through some kind of a path forward on the Inflation Reduction Act, that that did lead to some questions from from South Korea about U.S., U.S. commitment to to allies and partners. The issue about extended deterrence and nuclear reassurance that has come up as well, too. And again, I think when they come up, the two sides do come together. They they have this frank discussions. And I do think those issues are being being worked out. But but it does show that even though that the bedrock of the alliance is there and it's, you know, framed within this 1953 mutual defense treaty, we do on occasion see key issues coming up. And so so those are the points that we have to watch for. I would say in terms of challenges, there's there's many, as Jang had mentioned, there's some that seem to never really go away. North Korea is one of them. We only need to look at the headlines from this morning on North Korea's ICBM and intercontinental ballistic missile test to be reminded of the North Korea threat. And it's a problem that just has not gone away. Gone away, and it's going to continue to pose challenges. I also think economic security is a it's a major issue, and we'll probably hear more about that in the run up to the Biden U.N. summit. There's questions about U.S. export controls and what role South Korea will or will not be able to play in coordinating with the United States and and other allies. And, you know, a lot of this a lot of the I think challenges come in part not because of the U.S. South Korea relationship, but because of uncertainties and larger global issues, whether this be US-China competition or also the conflict that Russia's invasion of Ukraine and global conflicts elsewhere. I think this poses challenges to the U.S. Rock Alliance. So there's plenty of things to talk about for this upcoming summit. But overall, I think we're in a very good shape when it comes to the U.S. ROK alliance.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Great. Thank you very much. That is fantastic from all of you. I'll just start by saying that whoever is sitting in Andrew's chair on the back in the right, your future is bright. But let me just pick on what I think is a theme from all your comments and that that there's a fair amount of change, but also continuity. And I think that that applies also to what is the perennial problem out there, and that is North Korea. So that's the continuity. North Korea continues to be a challenge to the alliance, the challenge for the stability and peace of the region. But there's also change in the sense that we see a major augmentation. Of the capabilities of the North Korean regime on different fronts, cyber, nuclear missile. And that is more and more concerning. I mean, just a day or two ago, there was a launch that created a big alarm in Japan. So clearly this is front of mind. And therefore, I am pressed to ask you what I think is the the bigger question, the bigger question, but a difficult one. And I know that during your time at Brookings, you all wrote, wrote extensively and continued to write extensively about North Korea. But if I could ask you to analyze for us this problem, what can the alliance do? What can the international community do, and why we seem to be unable so far to have a more effective strategy vis a vis North Korea? So whoever wants to take it.

KATHARINE MOON: I'll start. I wish I had a really crystal clear answer to your question. In some ways, it's a way to ask, you know, what did the U.S. and South Korea do wrong or incorrectly? And is there a correct route to try to get at North Korea and the nuclear dilemma in particular? And I don't think there is one one answer. There is no one correct route, obviously. And to a significant extent, the COVID era and the shutdown of North Korea's borders have made things even more difficult than they were prior to that period. I think it's worth considering or remembering that North Korea had much more interactions

with the outside world in 2000. 12. 2013. 1415 than we might have imagined in Kim Jong Il's time. The Father's time, even so, under the new. Back then, ten years ago, Kim Jong Il was considered young and new. We expected some kind of change to come from the North Korean regime. That might give us some signals that he and his regime would like to engage the outside world. And I think to a significant extent, he there were measures that were taken. Just to give you an example, the North had developed a tourist industry that appealed to or wanted to attract foreign tourists. And that's a pretty surprising development back in 2012, 2013, 14, 15, etc.. Obviously, COVID made that impossible given what the regime chose in terms of a lockdown. And the other thing that's changed significantly that makes dealing with North Korea even harder today is the geopolitical shifts, specifically Russia and China. Ten years ago, we did not have a situation where we were beginning to see a certain kind of a skeletal outline of, you know, Cold War 2.0 or something like that. I hope we don't go there. But things are not good right now, obviously. And the level of distrust not only between North Korea and the U.S., North Korea and South Korea, but among North Korea, Russia, China and then the U.S., South Korea, Japan. These lines are getting drawn. No one's trying to draw them deliberately. No one's going and crossing and drawing a red line. But we're beginning to see lines getting drawn. And it makes for a much more precarious, uncertain environment in which to act, I think, until North Korea decides to open its borders. There really isn't that much anyone can really do until North Korea decides to meet diplomats, until North Koreans decide that its business community wants to engage the outside world again, until North Korea is able to house and host safely humanitarian aid workers who can provide the desperate help that they need in terms of the well-being of their citizens. There really isn't that much we could offer as intense incentives that we know might work. So I think we might even have to start maybe not completely over once North Korea is ready to open up, but that we're going to have to be a lot more creative, you know, this time around.

JUNG PAK: Thanks. If I could jump in, I think. Kathy's. Kathy's right. Over the course of the ten years that the Kim has been in power, ten plus years that Kim has been in power. Kim Jong un has been in power. His weapons systems have become much more sophisticated and diverse and dangerous. And, you know, I think what over the years, I think there have been lots of ways or lots of approaches that that have been taken. One is, of course, and we continue to to strengthen this is sanctions implementation of there used to be much greater array of trading partners, but also proliferation partners. And it's because of sanctions and their implementation that those numbers have shrunk quite a bit. The and I and, you know, we saw in the previous administration that we saw a great deal of engagement. But I think at the end of the day, only Kim Jong un can decide to do what's best for his people. And it seems that he's decided that what's best for his people and probably just for himself maybe is the is the pursuit of nuclear weapons. The we've mentioned in this session about how the pandemic has probably exacerbated health conditions and living conditions there, that the border has been pretty shut tight and aid workers have, for the most part, all left the country. So that is three years of children without vaccinations, people without the required required vaccinations and the required aid. And so, you know, we would encourage the DPRK to to come to negotiations. The president on down word. We've all been very clear that we want we want dialog without any preconditions. And that. But but it's really up to Kim Jong un and the DPRK to decide what, when and and how they're going to open up their their their borders. You know, I would I would also argue that there has been greater international consensus on this issue and that Beijing and Moscow can absolutely do more on on sanctions implementation and to press the DPRK to come to the to the table as well, Of course, will, you know, continue to evaluate our our approach and take our steps or next steps in lockstep with Korea and Japan, as well as other like minded partners, and to try to encourage Kim Jong un to come

to dialog, negotiation and dialog is really the only way that we're going to resolve this issue. And we hope that we hope that that the DPRK opens up its border soon.

ANDREW YEO: I would only add that in the past there may have been issues with their alliance in terms of their approaches to North Korea. I'm thinking about the early 2000 between, you know, President George W Bush and President Roh Moo hyun. But these days, the alliance is very well coordinated on North Korea issues. But in some ways, the ball really is in North Korea's court. And because they've been very recalcitrant to any kind of gestures or moves for opening. The issue hasn't really gone forward. So it's in some ways it's not it has a problem with the alliance, but it's not. It's not because there's some issue with U.S. coordination on U.S. South Korea alliance that this issue is not getting resolved.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you.

JUNG PAK: Think I add something to it, Kathy, you talked about about lines. I mean, but but I this is something that keeps getting deeper in terms of what we've seen over from the DPRK over the past couple of years is a closer alignment with Russia and China. You've seen these very odd statements coming out of Pyongyang over the past couple of years supporting PRC's position or in effect, parroting Russian and PRC disinformation and their positions and whether it's on orcas or Taiwan or Xinjiang or Hong Kong. These are things that DPRK does not really care about. But that's clearly for me, it's a signal that this is where they want to put their eggs. And, you know, I think it's really important for the U.N. Security Council and for the international community to speak with one voice. And I'll point to the pivot, the famous pivot from 2018 when Kim came to talks, as in my in my mind, that was a of a result of consensus and Moscow and Beijing and the United States and ROK and Japan and the international community all big on one page on saying. Shins.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you. This really important discussion. And I want to then shift a little bit and talk about what I do think is a departure, and that is President Yoon's Indo-Pacific strategy and broader strategic aim of this strategy. And I would like to ask for your views on what is driving this initiative. What role can the U.S. alliance play as South Korea thinks about its Indo-Pacific projection? But also, how is South Korea thinking about the China factor in all of this?

ANDREW YEO: Sure, I'll address that one first. So, yes, the South Korean government released its Indo-Pacific strategy last December and there has been a shift in South Korea's thinking in terms of its foreign policy in the role that it wants to play. It's not that South Korea has never thought about playing more of a global role. Even if you go as far back as the union administrations, this in 2009, there was a joint U.S. joint vision statement where they talked about the alliance playing a role for the region and the world, and they talked about issues beyond the Korean Peninsula. But I think this is an approach that the U.S. government has really owned. And I remember President Yoon or then candidate Yoon writing in Foreign Affairs that the U.S. ROK alliance would be at the core of South Korea's foreign policy strategy. And I think he's really stuck with that with that position. But in terms of, you know, how it's expanded, I think South Korea also recognizes that it can't be left behind as we see the security architecture evolving in the region. And a lot of this has to do with the US-China competition, but also the shift that China has taken, the direction of Chinese policy has taken a hard turn. And in the past, Korea has been criticized. You know, they were vacillating or their the terms have been they're vacillating. They're hedging. They're not. They're trying to. You know, they want to be a part of the U.S. Iraq alliance, but they it's really unclear what their position is in China. I think there will

still always be some degree of ambiguity. But I think this government, the U.S. government, has made it much clear that it wants to be a part of this growing network, a network of alliances and partners that want to support the rules based international order. And so to do that, it's not just about strengthening alliance ties with United States, but it's developing partnerships, relationships with other like minded states. And that's what we're seeing the South Korean government doing right now.

KATHARINE MOON: If I could add that there's also the economic sheer, sheer economic interest component and the fact that South the majority of South Korea's trade takes place in that region as well as its foreign investment. So it's not it's I agree with everything Andrew has said in terms of geopolitical pressures, especially emanating from China. But there is also the the economic national interest involved. In terms of South Korea focusing on areas closer to home.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you. And could I ask a little bit more about what through what instruments? So there is a security, there is economic, but, you know, trade agreements, infrastructure investment, economic assistance, reciprocal access agreements, you know, weapons sales. I mean, how do we see South Korea fleshing out this Indo-Pacific strategy? And are there countries where they will be working more intensely first? I mean, because it's a vast region, or what is the direction of this diplomatic initiative?

ANDREW YEO: Well, there has to be a there has to be a prioritization at some point. I think if you look at South Korea's Indo-Pacific strategy, there's a lot and they're they mentioned every region in the world. I think it's set for Antarctica. So there's a lot that South Korea wants to do. But in terms of where they put their emphasis and focus, I mean, it makes a lot of sense to look at Southeast Asia and maybe John can weigh in a little bit more about ASEAN's role and partnering with the U.S. South Korea alliance. But even before the U.N. government, the previous Moon Jae in government had the new Southern policy. So there was already attention towards Southeast Asia and even the moon government was looking to diversify its risk because of China's economic coercion that took place in 2016 2017. And Korea is still feeling those effects. So working with Southeast Asia partners, there's already a robust trade relationship with Vietnam. I think there's attention towards Indonesia as well too. So Southeast Asia has one place to look. There's also the Pacific Islands. That's another region that I think South Korea has taken an interest in in recent years, which hadn't been on their radar. And this includes and it's not just about security. As Kathy mentioned, a lot of these projects are about mitigating climate change. It's about infrastructure investment. It's not and this isn't just, you know, the defense, it's not just the Ministry of Defense, but of quake. The the aid agencies. You know, they're all they're involved this far, too. So I think, you know, I don't know where the within the different projects where they might put priorities. But certainly I think I think closer to home is where South Korea should be placing its emphasis.

KATHARINE MOON: If I just add also that South Korea's move toward the Indo-Pacific region, in terms of its focus, it's not just about insecurities increasing in the region because of China and of course, as I mentioned, economic interest. But also South Korea has a lot of assets that it can share in terms of knowledge and experience. So another area of cooperation that the different members would like to work on is, for example, vaccines and public health. Right. And given South Korea's relative and you know, well to claim success in managing COVID, the others look at South Korea as a model to learn from and that it has something to offer that others can benefit from.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you. So let me ask you about the future of the US alliance. And I know that last year when President Biden and Yoon met in the statement, they talked about a global comprehensive, a strategic alliance. So that implies a lot of ambition in elevating this partnership. And I wonder how should we interpret that term? What would that actually mean for these countries to achieve that kind of partnership? And where do you think these the what are the brightest spots for growth in the Lions, for deepening for a becoming a more multidimensional alliance? And what do you see as some of the potential obstacles that we need to navigate to have that deeper alliance for the future?

ANDREW YEO: Yes. So if if you think about this term global comprehensive strategic alliance, I mean, this is certainly not something the. The framers of the 1953 Mutual Defense Treaty would have thought if they looked at the alliance, really in terms of the defense, the defense of South Korea, they were trying to avoid a second Korean War. So it's about deterring North Korea. And, you know, I'm sure they didn't think about pandemics or supply chain resilience back then. So you can see how far the alliance alliance has come. As I mentioned before, though, this isn't something that just appears with the U.S. government. I mean, this the idea of global Korea has been in the making sense, I would say, in the post-Cold War era and following democratization. But it's really come to the forefront at first. You know, a lot of people know most people in the in the public eye think about Korea and of soft power, you know, the blackpink, the beats, the Korean dramas. But I think South Korea's prepared to go to the next step and and have others think about Korea as being a real strategic player, not just an economic player, not just thinking about Samsung or Hyundai. And it's you know, it's economic growth and development, but also thinking about South Korea being a security player. So in terms of the global Comprehensive strategic alliance, it's taking on a lot of issues that go beyond security strategy and defense. And that means addressing issues like space cooperation or artificial intelligence and technology. And it's also a recognition that, you know, we can't just think about the peninsula and about North Korea, but a lot of South Korea and the United States security interest is is wrapped in what happens geopolitically. And I think recognition of that. I mean, we're seeing the alliance recognizing that by talking about cooperation on some of these broader issues of global governance, climate change, climate change, supply chain resilience and so forth.

JUNG PAK: And I think it's it's in both of our interests. It's not a it's not a lopsided interest. It's a convergence of interests that that the U.S. and Korea are in the alliance, standing up for territorial integrity and sovereignty of nations for for democracy and democratic rights, for the rule of law and the international rules based order. And neither country can avoid the challenges that are facing us today. And I think the past three years has really shown how fragile some of these systems and infrastructures can be. And I think this is this is really a convergence of of interests that have been buttressed by this deep alliance relationship which positions us better for the future, too, to deal with these challenges so that the challenges are vast and really are are intractable. And it's not something one country can decide to do, but it's something that requires a coalition, whether through mini laterals or multilaterals or bilaterals, but something that we all need to be doing together.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you. And, you know, if I can add my \$0.02, when I think about the future of this relationship, I think that there is vast yet untapped potential for the United States and South Korea to work together to disseminate economic standards throughout the region. I think that that's one area where, of course, we have the chorus free trade agreement, and that's a very robust agreement that has done much to deepen the bilateral relationship. But I think that in this globalized economy and certainly in a region where global supply chains are so central, it's very important for like minded countries to be

thinking about the highest standards when it comes to the digital economy, disciplines of state owned enterprises, supply chain issues, critical minerals. The list goes on and on. And there's a step now within the Pacific economic framework. And I think that that sends a good signal that the United States and South Korea are working together with these other countries to develop this kind of standard. But I would make the case that when it comes to trade and rule making, you don't put all your eggs in one basket and therefore it's possible to operate on different platforms. And I think that eventually thinking about other trade agreements like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, I think that's what I would like to see when we commemorate the 80th year of this alliance. So that's just my wish list. When I think about some of the potential of the U.S., our alliance after that. Let me just ask you now for more not ten years on the line, but the end of the month. We have, of course, the state visit of President Yoon and. If you have any thoughts about what can what can we expect from that meeting? What are your your thoughts about what will be accomplished? This is the second time that they meet in Washington, I believe. So what do you think might be deliverables? Rapprochement. Chemistry between the leaders? Anything you want to share about your expectations of this meeting?

KATHARINE MOON: I'll I'll go first. I would say it's it's useful for all of us to keep in mind that the summit meetings are highly scripted. There usually are absolutely no surprises and also that the optics sometimes can be even more important than whatever content is discussed. So I expect that in terms of optics, the U.S. will roll out the the red carpet plus some for President Yoon, and that President Yoon will be gracious as a guest. I think I'm a little concerned in terms of the personnel shakeup in President Yoon's government, in terms of his leading foreign policy aides working on the U.S. That happened relatively recently, and whether I'm sure they will find ways to coordinate their work. But I expect that in one way or another, the issue of the South Korean public favoring, at least according to some polls, this notion, this idea of South Korea exploring its own nuclear deterrent. That might come up. I think it might be a little uncomfortable for President Yoon. But at the same time, I think the South Korean public is expecting both. A reinforcement of the U.S. is repeated promises about extended deterrence. The South Korean public is expecting that, as well as some possibility of exploring, perhaps civilian a civilian nuclear program to not block off South Korea's options in that field completely. Now, those are not saying that those are the Blue House's expectations, but I have heard that those are some of South Koreans expectations. I also would hope personally that President Biden and those who are facilitating the events would offer additional support, encouragement to continue to work on improving the Korea Japan relationship and that the U.S. would also increase its support and maybe a little bit of friendly nudging or prodding to Japan to offer some some substantial measures of reciprocity after President Yoon's very bold olive branch that he offered in March.

ANDREW YEO: Yeah. Let me just add on to what Kathy already shared. And of course, this summit is happening in the backdrop of the 70th anniversary of the alliance. So on one way and on one hand, it's going to be very celebratory. And this is a really big deal. There are not many things that last 70, 70 years. And so it is to be celebrate and, of course, recognition on the career side about us coming to the aid of South Korea during the Korean War. So that's going to be front and center. And then I also think it's part of this is about recognizing South Korea's contributions to the US economy, especially recently, and that union government support and helping promote a rules based international order. So these are things that are going to be recognized. And I don't know if there's if there's any other world leader that's getting a second summit within two years, two years in a row with President Biden. So it's this is something that's going to be it's probably going to be one of the highlights of the U.N. union governments. Of course, it will be staged well to

make sure that there aren't any gaffes or mix up. So we're as I'm sure both governments are praying that everything runs smoothly in terms of what what issue issues will be raised or agenda items. I mean, Kathy had already mentioned the assurance piece on an extended deterrence, and that has that's been going on for four years. Yes. Yet another promise that I think Koreans would appreciate that at the highest level. But some of the signals that I'm getting here in Washington, so that I meant there have been many conversations and meetings among Korea experts, among and among the Korea watchers group. And there's a lot of interest in economic security and talking about and talking about export controls and talking about economic policies. And that's not something that was always the case. And in the past, I mean, you would you would expect a lot more discussion about North Korea and the Times, and I'm sure that's going to be discussed. But but there's just a lot of, I think, interest, particularly on the Korea side, to talk about economic security issues. So I think that will be addressed. I did mention North Korea and then also some of the global issues that are very taking place in Russia and Ukraine, even though it's not a part of the region or the Indo-Pacific. I think that's going to be there's going to be ongoing conversations there about South Korea, support for for Ukraine and that ongoing conflict. And then lastly, there's the meat and bones of the U.S. ROK Alliance, Alliance management and cooperation issues. So I think some of the the points that may come up are and this isn't a surprise, these are there's been ongoing conversations for months on this, but discussions on industrial defense cooperation, artificial intelligence, emerging technology, and then also space cooperation that that might be discussed. But I think the most important thing is really the presentation of this this high level summit meeting and making sure that that both sides feel that this is this is a 70th year alliance and that things will go well so that we can look forward to that 80th anniversary. As you mentioned, Mireya.

JUNG PAK: You Andrew, you said that things hopefully things will go well. They will go well. We're we're all very excited for the state visit. And of course, this is the only only the second state visit that the Biden administration will be hosting. So never mind the two summits, but this is the there's another, you know, data point on how important and special this is. And so we're we're working very hard to make sure that this will go well. Andrew And and and I think you'll you'll all see that that this that the breadth and the depth of the relationship will be amply reinforced and shown showcased as when the when President Yoon comes to town.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you. So I'm about to turn to the audience for questions. Hi. My last question really is, you know, in the spirit of camaraderie as creator holders current than past Kathy and Andrew, would you have any suggestions for Jung to take back to the Foggy Bottom?

ANDREW YEO: Well, maybe get Blackpink's phone number on your speed dial so that we can get ready for the 80th anniversary of the summit? Nobody in seriousness, I think finding avenues for ongoing cooperation, engagement in the Indo-Pacific, I think will be welcomed. I know you're at the State Department and you're working on multilateral issues in ASEAN. So I think that's a great that's a great position to be in. But I mean, I think it's worth taking advantage of the U.S. government's willingness to have South Korea play. Greater global role and being more vocal on issues such as human rights and democracy in South Korea helped with lead the discussion on corruption in the summit, the second summit for democracy. And so while we have a leader who is is very supportive of the alliance, but also of promoting a rules based order, I think, you know, the State Department and then the Biden administration should do all that, can really leverage that to make headways with the alliance.

KATHARINE MOON: I think all I say is I have full confidence that Jung knows what she's doing and that she'll be just fine without too much from us.

MIREYA SOLÍS: All right. Thank you very much. And now thank you for your patience. I would like to ask for your questions. And there's a mike around. If you could raise your hand and identify yourself, be very concise and just the questions, please. And I'll take two at a time and in the second round also bring some questions from our online audience. So I have these gentlemen and this lady here.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi. My name is Sam Kim, a Bloomberg News reporter. I've got a question for Deputy Secretary Park.

MIREYA SOLÍS: So if you press the button, maybe you turn it off.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Sorry about that. So as Professor Moon points out, there's a sort of a growing voice. To have nuclear weapons among South Koreans. And I think this kind of adds a wrinkle to the relations between the U.S. and Korea. And a part of that, the reason it has to do with the view, I think that, you know, for Korea, South Korea to be taken more seriously by North Korea and to get its engagement more effective with North Korea, South Koreans seem to think that they need more than just extended deterrence from the U.S. They need their own nuclear weapons. Woody, how high is that on the minds of policymakers in the State Department? You know, how concerned are you about that voice growing voice in South Korea? Thank you.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you. And then the lady right next to you can. Thank you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I thank you so much for you all for being here today. My name. Oh, my goodness. My name is Eleanor Scheer to Hughes. I'm a defense analyst at the Asia Group. So as you all talked about the Indo-Pacific strategy that South Korea published last December, I was quite intrigued by the mention of the quad and how Korea does have an appetite to, as I think somebody alluded to, are networking more. But I am intrigued by the fact that South Korea is interested in more mini lateral networking, which Japan, for example, has been doing quite a bit in recent years. So I was curious to hear your thoughts on what you might envision Korea's role to be. Should it be involved in a cabinet in the capacity being an official member like the way in Australia, the United States and Japan are? Thank you so much.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you very much. So who would like to start us with some thoughts and those questions?

JUNG PAK: I've seen those polls and the reporting, and I'll leave it to the Korean people to talk about what you to to explain what what they mean by that. But from from my seat at the State Department and working with with our colleagues across the river, it's that that our extent as the president as the president himself has said that our our extended deterrence commitments encompass the the full range of our military capabilities, including nuclear. And so those commitments are ironclad. There are they have been unwavering and I'm sure you've you've seen everybody from the president to the SecDef to secretary of State and everybody below them say that and make sure that that we the our defense of the Korean of the Korean people and the rock are ironclad. We've expanded the scale and scope of of military exercises. We have both bilateral and trilateral. We've we've broadened extended deterrence dialogs. And I think you've probably saw readouts of

attacks last month. And so, you know, I think we want to this is we continue to build on our extended deterrence commitments. And I think that that that we've talked about change and continuity, continuity that has not changed at all. And I think we'll continue to build on that.

KATHARINE MOON: Could I add that, you know, there might be people in South Korea as well as some other countries that are still suffering the aftermath of the last presidential administration in the United States, where allies were left feeling more insecure and unsure about U.S. positions. But, you know, as long as we have Biden and we have, you know, more stable administrations in Washington, extended deterrence, that's that's a no brainer. I mean, this is just it's part and parcel of the alliance. You know, the U.S. could say and repeat this promise millions of times. And the Koreans just have to accept that the U.S. means it. You don't promise extended deterrence unless you mean it, for one thing. The other thing I would say in response to your very good question is that, you know, it's debatable whether the issue of a South Korean nuclear arsenal in theory, is something that would strengthen South Korea's hand vis a vis the North in any negotiations or interaction, because there are those who who are thinking critically that the North might want the South to keep desiring or even demanding U.S. support of such a an independent nuclear system in a weapon system on the peninsula as a way to drive a wedge between Washington and Seoul, but also as a way to get South Korea to invest in something that it really doesn't need given the extended deterrence. And potentially, if South Korea were to go on a nuclear path in terms of, you know, military exploration, that would invite sanctions from an array of actors globally, which would hurt South Korea. And so, you know, it's a question mark whether this would actually be a positive step for South Korea, even just in terms of its negotiating stance vis a vis the North.

ANDREW YEO: And just quickly on the question about the quad, I mean, I think this is exactly what South Korea wants to do in terms of being more engaged with many laterals, with other tri laterals on the quad. You know, President Yoon, when he was on the campaign, talked about Korea being a member of the quad. And I think he walked that back because he realized it's not just up to Korea. There's other four members that have to accept that. But, you know, there is the term quad plus that was used for a while. They haven't really phrased it that way. But there are these working groups and certainly South Korea can play to stay engaged with the quad countries, talking about some of these working groups. Talk about pandemic resilience, supply chain resilience. These are these are issues that South Korea it's hard to talk about supply chain, relative resilience in the Indo-Pacific without having Korea are part of that conversation. So they can certainly stay engaged with the working groups. But I also think moving forward, you know, especially as Korea, Japan relations improve, that there might be a larger role for them in the future. But right now, I don't think formal membership should be the goal. And also, I do think that probably the best avenue for where Korea can make its contribution, these many, many laterals are the existing U.S., Korea, Japan trilateral framework.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you very much. So let's take another question from the audience. So I have the gentleman there in that corner, and then I'll ask the question from the online audience. Go ahead.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I thank you so much for doing this. My name is Andrew Thornburgh. I'm a national security correspondent for The Times. Regarding the improving relationship between South Korea and Japan, I was wondering if there might be a potential room for making headwinds from the United States by encouraging security cooperation

between South Korea and Japan. And if there was any room for building out more interoperability between South Korea's military forces and Japan's self-defense forces.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you very much. And then I have a question from David Brun Strum from Reuters. And he asks, What role does the United States see South Korea playing in deterring or helping to defend against an attack on Taiwan? And I think that we spend a lot of times afternoons talking about North Korea, but the other hotspot is certainly Taiwan. I would amend this question and add what role does South Korea see for itself in a Taiwan contingency? So what is the U.S. view? What is the South Korean view on this important area in the region? So any takers?

ANDREW YEO: So tough questions. I'll start with the Taiwan one first. And I can also speak about the Japan issue. I don't know if, Kathy, you want to weigh in as well on Taiwan. I mean, this is something that I think even the U.S. government doesn't feel completely comfortable talking about in public. It's a very sensitive issue. Of course, they have in joint statements with the U.S. even last year in June, Biden's statement they mentioned about the importance of the stability of the Taiwan Strait, maintaining stability and security over the Taiwan Straits. But I haven't seen any open conversations about looking at contingency plans if I'm speaking personally. This is my own personal views. I do think that there needs to be more conversations on this front because if there is a Taiwan contingency and you don't have anything in place, it's too late. If something were to happen to figure out what role South Korea will play or what role the United States forces Korea will play. So there does have to be more conversations. And it's not just with Korea, it's with Japan as well, too, because there'll be forces in Okinawa or maybe even the Philippines. Now that we have four additional bases on a couple that are very close to Taiwan, it's going to be a collective effort. So I do think there needs to be more, more conversations happening, even if in private on how to address on addressing Taiwan contingency. On South Korea, Japan, I mean, in some ways, Japan and Korea both buy weapons and their weapons platforms are coming from the U.S. so it wouldn't be too difficult to improve interoperability. I assume that as they if they were to continue to conduct more joint exercises, I think there would be I mean, this that that would be the very reason to also improve, even increase that interoperability among among their militaries. It's it's also a bit sensitive maybe for Koreans to move push to fast forward on that. But that's probably some I don't know if Jiang maybe not can't speak on it. But from again, my perspective as not being in government, I would say that would be the prudent thing to do. I'm certain that the U.S. would be pleased to see greater joint operability among among the three militaries for trilateral cooperation.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you. Thank you very much. So then let me go to this side of the room because I haven't think a question here. This gentleman there. Mm hmm.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hello. Thank you very much. My name's Chris Parker from a student at SAIS and also a research assistant at the Korea program there. My question has to do with the Discord leaks in which South Korea was mentioned. What is your response to the U.S. government's, I guess, response to the leaks? But also, there's some chatter, at least on the South Korean side, about using this situation as an opportunity to enhance U.S. South Korea intelligence cooperations. Do you believe there are opportunities for enhance greater U.S.-South Korea intelligence cooperation, especially not only in the North Korea context, but also the China context? Thank you.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Okay. And to that, I have another question from the online audience and again, also from Reuters. Why did not coordinate that? So that's from David Rodriguez.

And he asks, how can the alliance make a greater impact outside East Asia in regions like Europe, Africa and Latin America? And I think it's interesting also, if we take into account the global pivotal state concept, right. So how can then South Korea have greater projection and networks that expand in a more in a broader geographical area? So any comment to those? Either of those questions?

JUNG PAK: I'll do the easy question first, which is that as a matter of principle, we don't talk about intelligence matters openly. And, you know, and I'll stop there. On the on the rock I'll Andrew mentioned that Ramon Pacheco Pardo from from Brussels. Our good colleague called him and said that you you owe him a third event. And that's when we started the Transatlantic and Trans-Pacific dialog to see where we can make those connections between alliances in East Asia and alliances in the in the Atlantic. So really proud to see how this has blossomed and really taken has really come to the fore. I'll mention that President, you'd as a first rock president ever to be invited to the Natal summit last year and that we're you know, we're continuing to we see continued cooperation among our best partners in the in the Asia-Pacific and the Pacific, be connected and working closely with our best partners in the in the Atlantic Alliance.

KATHARINE MOON: You know, that reminds me, this is not directly an answer to your question regarding how the the U.S. Korea alliance can. I'm sorry, it came from. Okay. How the alliance could be translated outside of the Asia region. But but in the spirit of cross fertilization, shall we say, a cross, you know, international borders across the Pacific, the Atlantic into South America, etc.. I think it's good for those who engage in career related matters to learn from different regions of the world. For example, at the very end of my stay at Brookings at my tenure. One of the projects that I was engaged in that I just absolutely loved and wanted to do more on was a work was a project together with an institute in Norway where we had organized a series of meetings in Norway, in Oslo, bringing together Europeans with expertise on North Korea, because many Europeans have had more engagement with the North at an earlier period because they have had diplomatic relations with the North. And it was fascinating to have people from Western Europe, from the UK, etc., in a mat in a in a variety of areas, from academia to business to diplomacy to humanitarian work, etc.. And it was so rich. And I remember that was part of what I had wanted to do to try to really cross ventilate so that the issues pertaining to the Korean Peninsula don't just stay insulated, you know, or just become a matter of U.S. Peninsula or U.S. Korea relations, because as we know more and more, whether it's North Korea, nuclear weapons and cyber hacking or whether it's South Korea and its aspiration for a global pivotal statehood. Engaging the world is something that would be very necessary in addressing some of the problems on the peninsula or challenges.

JUNG PAK: If I could come back to what we had mentioned at the top of the program, which is that this this chair as a platform for education and research and dissemination of information, when when I look at, you know, the U.S. ROK relationship and of course, there are their volumes written on the U.S. ROK relationship. But as home, I know there are some grad students and students in the audience. And also watching is that maybe there's homework in that. What does ROK, what is Korea's activities? What are Korea's activities outside in other parts of the world? And, you know, that kind of deep research, I think, would be would be really useful. And I think it will reveal a lot of things about what about what Korea is actually doing in the world.

ANDREW YEO: Not to mention that Jung was also a professor to be for a Korean government, and now it's coming out.

MIREYA SOLÍS: Thank you. Thank you very much. So all good things, unfortunately, have to come to an end where at time, I would like to ask you to please stay in your seats because the speakers need to leave, but please join me in thanking them for a terrific discussion. Thank you.