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The US-Japan-Republic of Korea trilateral summit

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INTRODUCTION

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O'HANLON: Greetings, everyone, and welcome to Brookings. I'm Mike O'Hanlon and along with my colleague Pattie Kim and Andrew Yeo, we would like to welcome all of you and three very distinguished representatives of the U.S. government to an important discussion today previewing something that a lot of us wouldn't have thought possible just months or certainly years ago, which is an amazing trilateral summit to be held later this week at Camp David. When we think back a few years, our colleague Jeff Bader at Brookings talked in various fora about how the Korea-Japan relationship was at perhaps the worst point he had ever seen in his career. Several years later, look at what's happening. There are amazing dialogues going on, trilateral cooperation in defense, much better vibe between the political elites of the countries, as well as the publics, and maybe a brand-new opportunity to do something that historically has been overdue but is important for our alliances and important for our overall posture in Asia and the Indo-Pacific.

Just a brief word of introduction of each of the panelists. Mira Rapp-Hooper is a senior director at the National Security Council. She's also author before that of "Shields of the Republic," a book about the importance of American alliances and the need to reinvent them for the current era. And now she's putting her academic aspirations into practice at the National Security Council, doing exactly that with this week one of the big moments in that entire effort. She works with Kurt Campbell, a true force of nature in Washington, a great friend. On a personal note, a person who's helped me and my family through some difficulties in the past, but also who's just been at the forefront of Asia policymaking in the United States for decades. Author, one of the authors of the pivot in practice, also the author of *The Pivot* as a book. Some people prefer "rebalance." Kurt has some funny stories about that, but what we do know is that he's succeeded in making the Indo-Pacific region a much higher priority for the United States in its foreign policymaking in the last 15 years or so. One more, one more brief word about Kurt is that in this capacity, he has, along with his colleagues, including Ambassador Emanuel that I'll speak about in just a second, he has helped create the AUKUS understanding with the United States, Britain and Australia. A lot of it's about submarines, but there's a lot more going on there too. He's nurtured and helped along the Quad process. But the Korea-Japan-U.S. piece until now has been slower to develop. So it's remarkable to see that piece coming together as well. And it really is testament to his long-standing efforts. Ambassador Rahm Emanuel is a force of nature, one of the most multi-dimensional, accomplished American political leaders of his day of our day, He he was congressman, he was chief of staff to President Obama, he was mayor of Chicago. And just when you thought he couldn't do anything else beyond what he'd already achieved, now he is the U.S. ambassador to Japan, where he has really loved the country, been seized by the country, brags about it whenever he gets a chance. Its mountains, its subways, its bike rides, its people, its culture. And so I could not be happier to see my five friends on stage. Please welcome them all and I'll pass the baton to Andrew.

YEO: Well, thanks so much, Mike, for that opening. And as Mike mentioned, just a few years earlier, we've been hard to imagine the leaders of South Korea, Japan, the United States getting together at Camp David for a trilateral summit given the serious deterioration in Korea-Japan relations. But yet here we are. So I want to start off with you, Kurt, and just ask if you could give us a bit of of how we got to this point, a bit of a stage setting for us, if you will, and we'll turn to Ambassador Emanuel and Mira. So, Kurt.

CAMPBELL: Great. First of all, welcome to everyone. It's terrific that you all turned out. Thank you to my friend Michael O'Hanlon for such a warm introduction, and we appreciate you hosting this. I am just going to take a minute because we rarely get to do this and rarely get to do it with colleagues that we care for and respect. I just want to say that the work that will be on display on Friday is in large part due to the two people on either side. I thought Rahm would be an effective ambassador, but I had no idea he would be among the most effective practitioners I've ever engaged with. He has set the mark of what it means to be an effective ambassador. Anyone who has any doubts about where the U.S.-Japan relationship exists in our strategic imagination, spend a couple of minutes with Rahm. It's been an honor and a pleasure to work with him. Mira last month was elevated by the president to be his senior director. It's wonderful to see up and coming women in the national security arena making their mark. She probably more than anyone

else behind the scenes, quietly and effectively has nurtured this relationship, this trilateral relationship over the past couple of years.

So let me just say, this meeting in Camp David is long in the making. Many of us see people around the room involved in U.S., Japan, South Korea relations for decades. I think we all understand that there are historical issues that have made this relationship more complicated. What we have seen over the course the last couple of months is a breathtaking kind of diplomacy that has been led by courageous leaders in both Japan and South Korea. What President Yoon and Prime Minister Kishida have done has defied expectations. They have, sometimes against the advice of their own counselors and staff, taken steps that elevate the Japan-South Korean relationship into a new plane. And I will say proudly that President Biden, his senior-most team, have supported this effort for the entire time that we've been in office. Private, discreet dialogues with Japan and South Korea, sometimes together, sometimes apart. President Biden, when he was vice president, made clear that this was a high priority for him to see what was possible to mend some of the hurt feelings, harsh sentiments on both sides. He applied his strategic empathy to this problem, and he is very much looking forward to hosting the leaders to Camp David. And it's significant that it's being held in Camp David. This is the first visit of foreign leaders to Camp David in the last several years since President Biden came to office. I think we all understand the significance when a meeting is held there. It's meant to signal with deep symbolism the importance that we attach to this momentous moment.

I will just say that what you will see on Friday is a very ambitious set of initiatives that seek to lock in trilateral engagement both now and into the future. And you will see it across many sectors in the security realm, in technology, in education. I think all three leaders will embrace embrace the potential for what is possible among our three countries. And I will just simply say that although there have been challenges in the past, we are more comfortable and confident now that the ballast in our ship will take us through what will inevitably be moments of difficulty in the future. We have the confidence that we will be able to sustain, build on what we believe will be a defining trilateral relationship for the 21st century.

Just lastly, I appreciate what Mike said. I believe this initiative is in keeping with the efforts that President Biden has taken to invest in American allies and partners, both in a traditional way, strong relations with Japan and South Korea, but also in innovative ways like the Quad, like mustering Indo-Pacific support for Ukraine as they faced down a terrible invasion from Russia. So this is not the culmination of all these efforts. It is a continuation of a process that we believe will be defining. We are seeking not just to lock in Japan and South Korea for the future, but the United States as well, that we will continue to remain engaged, forward deployed, and present in the dominant and important region that the Indo-Pacific represents. Thanks, Andrew.

KIM: Great. Well, thank you very much, Kurt, for that great overview. I just want to turn now to Ambassador Emanuel and to Mira. Clearly, all of this significant progress that we've seen wouldn't have been possible without great political will in Tokyo and in Seoul. So I'd like to hear sort of from your vantage point from Tokyo first, Ambassador Emanuel, you know, what are the key sort of drivers for this trilateral cooperation that's been that's sort of reigned high in Japan and then Mira, from Seoul? And what are some remaining roadblocks, would you say, that need to be addressed?

EMANUEL: So let me pick up a little where Kurt was and try to drive it. One is, I think people should remember in the realm of obviously American foreign policy is our alliances and our allies. That's the coin of the realm. Six weeks ago, the president was in Vilnius and Sweden and Finland joined NATO. Six weeks later, he's hosting Japan and Korea at Camp David. That bookends tells you a lot about where we are under this president in the sense, I think in the core piece of what makes America strong, it's its alliances and its allies. And because of the trust these two leaders have, they didn't do the bare minimum. They went farther. And I think you can never underestimate how somebody who thinks foreign policy is just politics and another set of clothing,

all politics is personal. It's not just local. And because of that trust level, they extended themselves beyond the minimum.

Number two, in the region, and Kurt has forgotten more than I know, just being there 18 months, look, when you tear it all down and get it down to it's essential. Our message is we're a permanent Pacific power and presence. And you can bet long on America. China's message: we're the rising power, they're declining. Either get in line or you're going to get the Philippine treatment. Now you can dress it up anywhere you want. That's basically the core. And come Friday, when this occurs at Camp David, this is a fundamental advancement of America's interests. China's entire strategy is based on the premise that America and its are number one and number two ally in the region can't get together and get on the same page. That's fundamentally going to be different. And as we go through that and that process, that will, in my view, change the strategic landscape of the Indo-Pacific.

And that it will have as much of an impact and it has a level of a deterrence, as much as we always think of deterrence, we have to start changing and have a wider version of what deterrence is. It has an economic component. It has a political component, it has a diplomatic component, has a military part and has an intelligence component. This on the political, diplomatic side is a major level deterrence. When you have this cooperation, this collaboration, and this coordination going forward. It's a foundational piece that alters all calculations going further.

And I think on the side, I would say politically, I think the biggest, the change I would say, and again, I want to be careful is I'm an American ambassador, I'm not one that does Japanese politics, at least until about right now. But I think on that, what I would say is a big change, and a little about observing Korea, is that both leaders saw the opportunities of the 21st century rather than the problems and challenges of the 20th century. And they seized it and they extended themselves. We gave them the trust and the confidence to extend themselves. And I think something that played in Japan that I think may not get seen or heard here but did there, one is, I think obviously when the prime minister went to Seoul, the reaction in Japan was incredibly favorable, and, very big surprise, politicians, elected officials respond to positive or negative reactions. Second, what also played well is that it was in kind of got lost here, but in Japan, when the G7 was held, he hosted, brought the Korean president, but then at the peace memorial, took him, escorted him to the Korean site that pays tribute to the Korean victims of Hiroshima and was with him by his side. And in Japan, I, little, I have, I want to, little window into Korea. That meant from the personal level, something. It wasn't just the kind of textbook. It was an emotional. It was a psychological barrier that broke. And I think all of that played. And rather than the relationships being managing the downside, it was actually seizing the upside. And good leaders understand the difference and then seize it and make the most.

RAPP-HOOPER: I'll just embroider on Ambassador Emanuel's great comments to share a few different --

EMANUEL: I just want the record to show this is the nicest we've all three been to each other in a long time.

RAPP-HOOPER: That's not true, we like each other. -- to sort of draw out what I think are a few different layers at which this breakthrough has been brewing to include the domestic politics in in Japan and Korea. So on one level, right, there has been some shared understanding of geopolitical interest amongst Japan, Korea, and the United States for a very long time. Nowhere is that more obvious than with the threat that's posed by the DPRK's illicit nuclear and missile programs. And we've had a very thorough trilateral coordination and cooperation on DPRK issues, albeit narrowly, for some time, for for a good long time. But of course, structural forces in the Indo-Pacific have been shifting. That includes the increase in capability in DPRK and the use of coercion and provocation in the DPRK. It has also included increasing assertiveness from the PRC in the region in a variety of different places. And then, of course, Russia's brutal illegal invasion of Ukraine, which in many ways kind of overturned the chessboard on what a number of our allies

and partners thought where the basic precepts of international politics. So with these basic shifts, I think you also got a set of interests in Korea and Japan that were increasingly aligned and understanding that the threat environment was changing, that Seoul and Tokyo increasingly face many of the same challenges. And that fundamentally, even though there had been serious historical issues that kept them apart for a long time, there were also a number of fundamentally aligned values and interests that should bring them together.

But of course, the structural forces alone don't make for the rapprochement. Right. In our first two years in office, the United States and President Biden in particular supported both Korea and Japan in a variety of ways. You know, those were his two foreign leader visits, first two foreign leader visits to the White House. They were his first two stops in Asia when he took his first trip to Asia. And throughout, he made clear that our trilateral relationship and the fundamental betterment of ROK-Japan relations were in the U.S. fundamental national interest, because our ability to stand side-by-side and shoulder-to-shoulder in the Indo-Pacific was second to none in our priorities. But it took the rise of two particular leaders to actually get this done, as as Ambassador Emanuel is indicating. In Korea, in South Korea, which Pattie asked me to speak to, we had the election of President Yoon, who on the campaign trail had made abundantly clear that he intended to change the direction of relations with Japan. He spoke about this while he was campaigning, even though he knew it wasn't always going to be the most popular thing. He was completely unrepentant as soon as he was reelected that this was going to be his aim. And in many ways, we've seen him and his top leadership barrel towards this goal, just in their first year of office to get it done within less than a year of him being inaugurated, which is pretty remarkable.

Just this week, on August 15th, which is Korea's National Liberation Day, President Yoon gave a remarkable speech. This typically would have been a day in which Korea-Japan tensions, historical wounds would have spilled into the fore. And quite to the contrary, this National Liberation Day speech was replete with references to the fact that Korea and Japan were fundamental partners, that our security was inextricably linked and that we had to stand together on the way forward. It is a remarkable thing to see in writing within just a year of this initiative beginning in earnest. But another thing that happened on August 15th is that President Yoon's father passed away at the age of 92. It was clearly a very sad loss for him. He was a renowned economist, a mentor to the president. And one of the things that jumped out to me and my team as we were poring through his obituaries and his bio to learn more about him is the fact that President Yoon's father traveled as an exchange student in the year 1967 to Japan, where he fell in love with the country and its people, and came to believe that on some fundamental level, Korea and Japan belong together. And that is a reminder of the personal nature of politics, who one's parents are, how they're educated, how they spend their time can fundamentally affect your worldview. And it happened to be at this particular time that this Korean president believes not just in the fundamental geopolitical value of changing this relationship, but had to his core imbued in him the fact that this was going to be a partnership for the future that he intended to pursue. So we have these structural forces. We have two particular leaders meeting their moment, and we do believe we have a new chapter and a new beginning as a result of those things.

YEO: That's really great to hear. I mean, I'm the Korea chair here, but I didn't know that story or anecdote. So that's, thanks for sharing that personal background. The White House has really been doing their homework here.

But I'm glad that all three of you have talked about the alliance relationship. So we are familiar with the Korea-Japan rapprochement. But it's not just Korea-Japan. We've seen a tightening of U.S.-Japan and also U.S.-South Korea relations. So we're at this moment, this moment where, I've said that the stars have a line in some ways, both at the structural level but also at the domestic level. Yet even though we notice that the stars have aligned, there's still challenges on the home front, domestically, I think. Certainly for Korea and Japan, if you look at just where the leaders are currently in terms of their approval ratings and even for President Biden, I mean, next year there's there's reelections and there's, so he'll have to turn attention towards the campaign. So amidst all of that, how can we ensure that that this trilateral relationship will move

forward? And I'm even reminded just a few weeks ago of the diplomatic tiff over the Liancourt Rocks, otherwise known as Dokdo or Takeshima Islands and Korea, Japan. I mean, these are reminders that there's still challenges at play. So maybe I'll start with you, Kurt, and Ambassador Emanuel and Mira, if you have, if you if you all just like the weigh in we welcome that. But but how can we ensure that this relationship moves forward?

CAMPBELL: Andrew, it's a great question, and I think our strategy would be to try to address it in a multifaceted way. Probably the most important thing that we can do on Friday is to commemorate and to accord both leaders the respect that they deserve. This is a courageous move. It belongs on the top tier with respect to diplomatic initiatives of modern times. It is dramatic and it needs to be recognized not just domestically but internationally, Andrew. And we believe by hosting them in Camp David and launching a number of trilateral initiatives, we will be able to play a small role in supporting that. But others can do their part as well.

Secondly, I think in the past, when we have had setbacks, sometimes the United States had remained in the background or on the fence. I think there has been a view among Asianists that perhaps it's inappropriate for the United States to engage in some of these issues, that they are messy, that their domestic politics involved, there will be concerns about taking sides. Andrew, I think that period is over. I think the United States is now deeply invested in this. And you can imagine then when we approach, which will be inevitable challenges, that we will weigh in, in a desire to make sure that our momentum is not lost and that we rise above challenges, whether they are local or national.

The third area that I think is important is to extend the nature of this trilateral engagement, not just to narrow bureaucratic and government levels or the security side, but basically societally. If you look at other periods in the past where rapprochement has taken place, like, for instance, between Germany and France in the 1970s and the 1980s, it began with a narrow engagement between a few leaders and then bureaucrats, but then very quickly was embraced at a people-to-people educational level.

So I think what you will see on Friday - we don't want to get ahead of ourselves - we will announce a number of things: a trilateral annual summit between the three leaders, which we intend to abide by. A national security and secretary of state effort that will help prepare the way for that. We're going to invest in technology to have a three-way hotline for the leaders and others inside their governments to communicate. We are going to make commitments to dialogue and engage in critical circumstances. However, we're going to go beyond this. We're going to invest in people-to-people and educational initiatives. We are going to try to invest in a much broader, deeper, thicker, trilateral set of engagements, which brings our peoples together in important ways. And so you can never, Andrew, make a fundamental commitment that that, you know, it's not possible to go backwards, but we're going to try to embed this in our politics in such a way that it would be hard for any leader in either of the three countries. And remember, you were gracious enough to talk about both Japan and South Korea. Each of these countries are aware that it was not long ago that we were debating pulling out of these alliances, or at least one of them. We're hoping to embed this in our own national psyche in a bipartisan way that will be enduring and will be critical for the infrastructure and the architecture of the Indo-Pacific going forward.

YEO: Ambassador Emanuel, do you have anything to add or --

EMANUEL: I think that I think the core of the question is how do you ensure that this trilateral relationship is not just dependent on these three leaders and that it gets embedded into the system? And the goal here is - just be clear - that this becomes the new normal and that you weave it into the DNA of all the institutions, whether it's intelligence, security, political, diplomatic, economic, and that nobody or no one country or no one future leader rolls the rock back down the hill. And I do think because it's so multi-dimensional across so many spectrums and there's, you know, this October was a two-year anniversary of Prime Minister Kishida becoming prime minister. He has two more years of his tenure. Is that it gets embedded into the institutions that will be

interfacing among the three so that this becomes the new normal and that nobody else has to spend the type of both political capital, time, etc., to roll this hill here and that it's now, here is the new floor. And I do think that's, I actually believe, based on the fact that you're going to have meetings, you're going to have an annual, this is the inaugural of a trilateral set of meetings that's going to be across parts of the government. It's going to happen on the intelligence level, is going to happen on the security level, across that bed, that that becomes wedded, woven into the structure in the way you look at things, in the way you operate. That will then fundamentally be a new shift. And I really believe this August 19th is going to be different than August 17th, and it will be a new day with a new set of structures and a new set of institutions and a new set of perspective. And I think it doubles down not only our strength about alliance, but more importantly, it doubles down on the fact that we've created something that exactly what China was hoping would never happen.

CAMPBELL: One last thing on this. Mira also has some really interesting insights about polling that you might be able to offer. But I will also say this, you guys, I think when we started this process and we were building for, towards Camp David, I at least wondered whether there would be sentiment in one or the other of these countries that would say, let's be a little bit resistant, because if we trilateralize these things, what will it mean for the bilateral relationship? Will that still be as important? And each of these countries fully embrace the nature of the bilateral importance. It's their, each of their countries' probably most important bilateral relationship. I will tell you, I have been extremely pleasantly surprised at how committed the leadership teams are in both countries to all these trilateral endeavors. There has been no sense that, gee, if we do this, does this mean that some element of our bilateral engagement will be diminished? No, they see it as additive, as effective, and as in many respects, complementing their national strategies.

RAPP-HOOPER: Just to touch briefly on the the point that Kurt was referencing, we do see some polling out in both Japan and the ROK - and Ambassador Emanuel's very on top of this - that is more optimistic than we might have thought at this particular point. And mostly what that polling indicates is that both of these publics understand why their leaders have taken these steps. Now, there are certainly certain corners in both countries where the steps are less than popular, but particularly in Japan, public opinion polling is quite a bit more favorable than we might have expected. So part of what we're seeking to do here, again, just to put a fine point on what Kurt and Ambassador Emanuel have said is yes, definitely to raise the floor and also to build resilience by embedding ourselves institutionally in an increasingly structured, complex, broad, and deep set of interactions and institutions that reduce the incentives for any one party to pull away or to seek to loosen those ties. So to end where Andrew began on the question of these perpetual irritants and issues that may continue to simmer, I don't think anyone's under any illusions that things like territorial irritants are going to completely vanish. But their relative importance, the way that they're handled in any individual system and how they are dealt with on balance, with respect to the overwhelming number of things that are going well and positive interactions that very clearly serve the interests of all three. It's our view that we're creating the incentives for each one of our leaders to pick those more institutionalized, resilient forms of cooperation and deprioritize the irritant.

EMANUEL: Can I make one closing? I apologize. One is, you know, K-Pop is really popular in Japan. But anime is really popular. In Korea. You could try in Koreatown in Tokyo to get a table. It's going to take you months. There's something going on that's I mean, beyond what we can talk about all the, you know, the, you guys will read the communique. I'm not going to. No, no, no. I'm serious. No. But on a serious point, there's something below the communique that's happening on a cultural level, on a dynamic between the country and the people. That has changed the politics again. Are there flash points? There are flash points. But you know what? Here in the United States, we're going to have to actually update to our own way that we look at this because it's changing in real time, in real ways in the two respective countries. And that is happening. The politics is reflecting those cultural currents as well.

KIM: So thank you. I'm going to I want to turn to North Korea now and see if we could go a little bit deeper there. You know, North Korea obviously looms as a common concern for all three

countries, and it's been a large bolstering deterrence, defense vis-a-vis North Korea has been a big priority for trilateral cooperation. So, Mira, if we could start with you, can you just go over what some of the steps that the three countries have taken in recent months to bolster deterrence, what may be coming down the pike, and how has this changed the situation materially on the ground? And also, if there's anything being done on the diplomatic side, because, after all, boosting deterrence is incredibly important. But without diplomacy, you're not going to fundamentally get to peace in the region. And so if you could touch on that as well.

RAPP-HOOPER: Yeah, happy to. Pattie, as you know very well, you know, the U.S., Korea and Japan, even when times have been tough between Korea and Japan, have found ways to cooperate on North Korea. Right. Because the threat and the challenge are so obvious and present to both of these allies that it's impossible not to. But one of the things that we have been very gratified to see as their ties have warmed and our trilateral cooperation has deepened, is that the kind of shared resolve and understanding that we all bring to the DPRK challenge has grown along with it.

So, there are a number of ways in which we see that manifest. Obviously, we have at this point trilateral meetings at all levels of government. Our leaders are meeting for the first-ever standalone trilateral summit on Friday. But over the course of this administration, this is actually the fourth trilateral leaders meeting, which is an impressive number. We've had huge success in our national security advisors' trilateral meetings, which have really been the engine of the leader-level meetings that help to tee up the agenda and the program of work that the leaders will focus on. We've had some important touches at the foreign ministerial and certainly the defense ministerial level as well, and our deputies and on down meet in trilateral formats to break up different pieces of the problem. So, in almost every one of these settings we are talking North Korea. And depending on which building you're talking about, the problem might be different, but whether it's, you know, exchanging views on the picture that we see, how we understand the challenge, what we think the regime wants, we are exchanging those views incredibly regularly. We're using those fora to talk about things like ballistic missile defense cooperation, joint exercises, which we conduct regularly. We're increasingly looking closely and cooperating on areas including DPRK cyber challenges and cryptocurrency challenges. And you'll see more on that in the statements and factsheet that we release on Friday.

So the picture has gotten increasingly broad and deep, and I think the the exchanges is quite open and frequent amongst our three countries. In Cambodia, when the leaders met last November, we released a statement that we called the Phnom Penh statement and it was quite detailed and has set out the program of work that we've been working on since. That made a commitment to share early missile warning data amongst our three countries. And one of the things we'll be able to report out on Friday is that we're well on our way to being able to do that, as well as make progress in a number of other information-sharing areas that allow us to pool data and information to better understand the picture that we are facing. And there'll be a number of other areas that we can point to coming out of Friday to include a more comprehensive exercise program, other cooperation on measures that are intended to strengthen extended deterrence and improve stability. But I'll save a few of those for the big reveal on Friday.

But to Pattie's question about diplomacy, it's certainly the view of the United States that while these extended deterrence measures are incredibly important, undeniably important in the face of this challenge, we remain open and ready to talk to the DPRK at any time without preconditions. We've said that since the beginning of the administration. We have reached out through multiple channels repeatedly over the months. And in particular since an American citizen crossed into North Korea, we have been making contact with the DPRK to seek to ascertain his welfare and to invite the DPRK to come to the table to us to discuss this issue. We have not had reciprocity to those invitations, but we will continue to try, because we believe exactly as Pattie said, that diplomacy is an essential complement to these stronger measures to strengthen extended deterrence, and that fundamentally diplomacy is beneficial to North Korea as well as it may be to any of the three of us. By the same extension, Japan and the ROK all have their own

issues that concern them when it comes to the DPRK. We share a perspectives on those, we know one and not one another's positions very well. If ever the time comes where the DPRK is willing to talk to one of us, we think that's a great thing. Diplomacy remains open, should, should the DPRK choose to take us up on it.

CAMPBELL: So just I agree very much with what Mira said, but I will also say we look very carefully at the circumstances in Northeast Asia. And I think it's undeniable that there have been some changes in North Korea. They've clearly taken some lessons or some views from their last high-level engagement in Vietnam with the United States. We haven't really had any fundamental interaction with them since then. We have tried to be creative in our approaches. We have not only kept our door open, we've tried to engage on a humanitarian basis trying to support them during periods when they were faced with issues associated with COVID and the like, with very generous offerings of support. I think it is undeniable that North Korea's relationship with China has changed and probably with Russia as well. So it is possible that, you know, that we are all familiar, Mike's written about it, we've all experienced a kind of diplomatic rhythm and approach that North Korea has followed for decades. And so it had been the case that after a series of military tests, they would then be perhaps prepared for diplomacy. It appears that many of these military tests are not designed to lure us for diplomacy, but to take steps to improve military and nuclear capabilities. And so I think our response to that is, it is true, Pattie, that we do keep our doors open, but the most important steps that we take are in the realm of vigilance, working closely with allies and partners, making sure that other countries understand some of the challenges that we're facing. We reach out often to China to encourage them to play a responsible role. We warn countries like Russia who're thinking about engaging with North Korea in inappropriate ways. These are all important steps that we are taking that we think are important. But at the same time, we have to recognize that at least to date and now it's been almost three years, North Korea has really not reached out to any one of the three of us.

YEO: We have, so I'd like to get to audience questions, but before we do, I want to tag team with Pattie here to ask this final question, which looks at the broader regional landscape. If we look at U.S.- Japan- Korea trilateral cooperation in the broader context of the regional architecture, we also have the Quad, we have AUKUS, we have these initiatives with the Pacific Islands, with ASEAN. This is all terrific in terms of strengthening allies and partnerships, these relationships in the region. But there are some actors, there are some allies and partners that may feel a bit uneasy that perhaps we're going too far ahead. And I'm wondering if, how can we ensure for those that feel that that these steps would be actually undermining regional stability, how we can reassure allies and partners? I think Pattie has a similar question in a different way and a different angle.

KIM: To tag on to that, you know, China has often complained that trilateral cooperation is really against China. This is a mini-NATO that's encircling China. And so would you say that these deepening trilateral ties is impacting the United States ability to diplomatically engage or stabilize relations with Beijing?

CAMPBELL: I'll try to answer, and then I think Mira will have something to say. So I think Andrew's question was initially about the response of allies and partners. And I think Pattie's good question is about China. I would simply say I am not aware of any country in the Indo-Pacific that is critical or resistant of the steps that we have taken. In fact, behind the scenes, even some countries that might surprise you have been very welcoming of our engaging with a host of countries and and a series of efforts to to knead together, to to build greater resiliency and creativity in multilateral and many lateral groupings. And so, Andrew, to be honest, I'm not aware of any country that says, "wait, you're going too far." If anything, the question is, can it be sustained? Can you ensure that these important commitments can be taken into the future? And we hear that sometimes in the Pacific and sometimes in Southeast Asia. And I think we have a much greater confidence now that I believe that the American engagement in the Indo-Pacific is here to stay and that this is now fully embedded in the American system, embraced in a bipartisan way and will be resourced and sustained into the future. Pattie, to your good question, the only thing I would say

and I actually, one of the things that Rahm has brought to this realm is plain speaking. And so, oftentimes we get --

EMANUEL: Four letter words.

CAMPBELL: He's done very little of that, actually. One of the things that we've seen, of course, is this idea that these steps are in some way encircling. Almost every country that we work with, I can assure you, does not see it in those terms. They feel in many respects under unimaginable pressure, huge pressures economically, diplomatically, and militarily. They also believe that the last 40 or 50 years are some of the best years in the history of the Indo-Pacific. Remarkable prosperity, tremendous wealth creation, tremendous innovation and integration, lifting billions of people out of poverty. It's nothing to sneeze at. It's very substantial. And they believe that elements of this operating system are coming under duress. It's natural that a rising state seeks to adjust elements of the existing system. But I think many of these countries believe that steps that China is taking won't just amend the system, but will destroy it or make it much less viable as an institution to propel prosperity and peace. And so what they are looking for is confidence to work and act together to sustain a system that will still evolve in important ways, but to sustain a system built on the rule of law, on freedom of navigation, peaceful resolution of disputes, and understanding that the American role is critical in the maintenance of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific. All of these things, I think these countries think are important. And so, Pattie, I just would simply say that I don't think many countries accept the idea that this is somehow a, a noose or a effort to contain China. All these countries have deep, profound economic and political interests in a steady and stable relationship with China. What they sense and what they witness is a China whose actions have demonstrably changed in recent years in ways that threaten their security and that raise larger concerns both nationally and in the region.

RAPP-HOOPER: What I'll add here, Pattie, is the tack that we plan to take with this trilateral partnership, what you could expect to see from us and what what message I think that will send to the region. And that is going to be an overwhelmingly affirmative message. One of the many beauties of the moment that we are living in with this extraordinary alignment between the U.S., Japan, and ROK is that this is no longer a partnership that is solely focused on security from a single threat actor in a narrow set of issues. This is a broad and deep partnership that touches so many different aspects of what we do in the Indo-Pacific. So one of the central messages you're going to hear from us on Friday is that this is now a partnership for the whole Indo-Pacific. One of the many major changes that has come out of the ROK under the Yoon ministration is that the ROK issued its very first Indo-Pacific strategy, which puts us in a position with Japan and the ROK to be able to work side by side in the full implementation of our highly complementary strategies all over the region. Some of the deliverables that we discuss on Friday will include ways that we can work together better in Southeast Asia. How we can work together better in the Pacific Islands, how we can work together better to reinforce the regional economic order, and to provide more effective and efficient security and development assistance. These are all things that our partners in the Indo-Pacific want and they need and that our countries individually are already delivering. But we can do better if we're standing together. So like the lens that is on our Indo-Pacific strategy, the way that we have fashioned the Quad, our aim is to show that everybody is better off when these three countries are working together, because it happens to be true.

EMANUEL: I mean, to me, I know you want to get to questions, but as I like to say, does anybody have questions for my answers? So I'm just going to go. Look, nobody in the region wants a untethered, unanchored China. If you think this starts, that the trilat's the problem, we've got to go back to zero here. I think President Biden doesn't get the full credit, in my view, for having China as basically, in the region, will never win the award for the good neighbor policy. They have a land conflict with India. They just fired water cannons at the Philippines' Coast Guard in operation. They're in conflict constantly on the Senkaku Islands and violating that EEZ. They fired five missiles on Japan's EEZ post-Nancy Pelosi's visit. They've had economic coercion as recently as 2017 against Korea and then just ending that with Australia. That is - and that is I'm just doing it by memory and I'm probably missing half of it. This region is desperate for more of America. All of

America, not just its strategic, not just its battleships, not just, but its political front, its economic front, its engagement with the region. China is - unanchored, untethered is a risk to the region. And the fact is, in the region, whether it's the Quad, whether it's this new trilat, what was left off your list was also Philippines making major efforts with us on the islands, whether it's AUKUS, is a restructuring because people understand and in strengthening of America's alliance and commitments to the region. In fact, that is exactly, it's welcomed. And I can tell you that on the diplomatic side across the spectrum, not just with developed countries but Pacific Islands, others in the region, how much of my colleagues in in Tokyo are so appreciative about what's about to happen on Friday. And so I would actually say the inverse, which is when it comes to disruption or caution, it's not the trilateral process. It's actually all the coercion and the conflict and the constant harassing of others on a geographic basis or resource basis or what's going on in fishing rights, water, mineral rights, what's going on on resources exploration. That is what's actually disruptive.

KIM: Great. Thank you. Well, we're going to turn it over to Q&A now. I will go with the gentleman first here.

YEO: If you can identify your name and affiliation and.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi, Demetri, with the Financial Times. And I'd just like to say I think we should dub in KC and the Sunshine Band with all the optimism up there. My question is, do you think what's happening on Friday is going to be, when historians look back, the first important step towards a collective security agreement between the three allies? And separately, will you also mention anything about the Second Thomas Shoal in the statements on Friday?

CAMPBELL: So, look, Demetri, I think the the agreements and the engagements on on Friday will be a substantial step forward in recognizing the common security picture that each of the countries are facing, along the lines that Ambassador Emmanuel and Mira have indicated. We are taking some initial quite substantial steps towards recognizing that we face a common horizon and that it will require common actions. I think those are substantial steps. I think we can imagine a future with more ambition. But I think it's very careful. Like, you opened your comments by saying a lot of optimism up there. The key is not to get too far over your skis, to take this a step at a time, to build appropriately, to not get beyond the domestic context of which we are dealing. Each country has the confidence in the strongest possible relationship with the United States, and we will explore how to extend elements of those bilateral engagements into a trilateral setting. But we will do it prudently, we will do it carefully, and we will do it responsibly. And then I do want to just underscore that when Mira says that these leaders share our views about a common security environment, I think we will hear the leaders speak together about the situation in Ukraine and the need for vigilance. You will hear commentary and statements about the need to maintain peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. You will hear also a view that abiding by international law in international waterways is a central feature of the maintenance of peace and stability. So I think you will see a broad gauged set of documents and statements that reinforce the common purpose of each of the three leaders. And all I would say to me is that stand by til Friday to hear the exact specifics and hopefully you'll you'll be depressed by then again. So not so optimistic. I know. I know. Okay.

KIM: Next questions?

YEO: A couple of questions.

KIM: Yeah, maybe we'll collect two or three.

CAMPBELL: Yeah. Thank you, we'll be happy to do that.

KIM: Right here and then over there.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you, my name is Kensuke Abe from Marubeni Corp. So my question is whether Taiwan issue and the outbound investment restriction, will the agenda in the summit.

KIM: Can we squeeze in the question middle right here, please?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Haeyoon Kim from the Asia Society Policy Institute. Thank you so much for the opportunity. My question is about the Fukushima radioactive water that's very likely going to be released. Do you foresee any possible challenges after this trilateral summit, that getting in the way of improving the relations between Korea and Japan? Thank you.

KIM: Just right here. We'll just take it all in and you guys can choose, pick and choose.

CAMPBELL: Thank you.

EMANUEL: Shall we just say yes?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you. Igor from the South China Morning Post. You guys said we should expect some announcements on technology. I was wondering to what extent the Biden administration will encourage both Japan and South Korea to join the U.S. lead on curbs to investment on Chinese advanced technology. Thank you.

CAMPBELL: Mira, do you want to start and then I'll go?

RAPP-HOOPER: I'm happy to take the question on Taiwan. I'll note that in the past and our last statement in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, there's already significant language in which we take a trilateral position on Taiwan. I think it's very clear and it's certainly something the president raises in every meeting with close partners. It's an issue that matters deeply and is close to all of our hearts. Each one of our countries has a clear position on the importance of peace and stability in Taiwan. So I would expect that to come up.

CAMPBELL: And I would say to your good question, one of the things that is important in these trilateral settings, and I've witnessed it myself, is each leader thinks it's important to update on specific national initiatives or other things that we're working toward. So I would fully expect that President Biden would explain his rationale and the steps that the U.S. government is taking, both with respect to outbound investment, other initiatives that we're likely to take in the realms of the IRA implementation and the like. Our partners are continually engaging in those discussions. We have very active dialogues on all things that we're doing on the technology front. And I think it would be fair to say that both Japan and South Korea are more aligned on technology-related issues than I think are widely understood. I do also believe that there have been discussions among all three countries about Fukushima. I believe that the IAEA has been very clear about its findings. I think that has been accepted generally in all three countries. And I believe that there will be continuing appropriate discussion and discussions among all three. Rahm?

EMANUEL: One is that if you looked at all three countries in the last year to produce their own national security documents as it relates to the overall view, every one of them are not only complementary of each other, any one of us could have written the other one country's national security documents. And this is a byproduct of that kind of common vision and shared foundation. Two, to Fukushima, I'm going up at the end of the month. I'm going to go have dinner up in Fukushima. Fish dinner. They have been unbelievably transparent. I say this. They brought the international community in. They've been unbelievably scientifically based in their efforts of being forthright with the public. A lot different than basically saying we're not publishing youth unemployment numbers anymore. And second is that - thank you very much for laughing on that one. Second is you take a look at the four nuclear plants by China on the coast. It's close to 4 to 5 times worse when it comes to sense of the distribution into the water of nuclear material or anything else. Japan has done a heroic effort over the years to do exactly what they're supposed

to do to be a good citizen, corporate, good world citizen. That is in direct contrast to what China has done with their nuclear plants. And they've been forthright with all the information and transparent over the years. And then third, I would just say as it relates to trade and economics, one is we just ended the fourth year in a row where Japan is the number one foreign direct investor in the United States, and the United States for the fourth consecutive years is the number one direct investor in Japan. Second is that the United States has now replaced China in Korea being the number one exporting market. And I think that the economics of each other's countries, the investments in either agriculture, automotive technology, is reflective of the fact that there's a, not only a great deal of economic opportunity in all three countries, you actually are going to start investing in countries that respect the rule of law, invest in countries that give you legal certainty and respect in countries where information is transparency, you can make a good decision based on the bottom line of the business. And that is actually what is bringing a lot of countries together.

CAMPBELL: Just just one thing on this good point that Rahm's made.

EMANUEL: And Kurt's going to pay for the dinner.

CAMPBELL: And I would love to, thank you. The the idea of the investment and the engagement between our countries does not get enough attention. And so in the two and a half years since President Biden has been the president of the United States, just to give you an example, South Korea has invested over \$100 billion in the United States in new technological pursuits. That is a remarkable vote of confidence. And the same dynamic is under way with Japan as well. So I think, you know, again, Demetri warns us not to be too optimistic. There are times in global politics where it's appropriate to focus on an important step and this is one of those times.

YEO: I think that's a terrific way to close our conversation. So, Ambassador Emanuel, Kurt and Mira, I want to thank you again for stopping by Brookings to just share your thoughts. I do want to ask the audience to stay and remain seated until our speakers can walk out the door because they have to get to their next event. But thank you again to our audience, those online as well, too. And thank you again to our speakers and to our terrific staff.