

# A New Chapter for Pragmatic Diplomacy



President  
Lee Jae Myung



President  
Donald J. Trump

How US-South Korea ties span defense, trade, and innovation





# A New Chapter for Pragmatic Diplomacy

How US-South Korea ties span defense, trade, and innovation

## CONTENTS

**3 Strengthening the US-South Korean alliance**  
By Newt Gingrich

**4 South Korea: An indispensable ally**  
By Joseph R. DeTrani

**6 Grateful for the unwavering US-South Korea Alliance**  
By U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson

**7 US-South Korean unity is communist deterrence in the Indo-Pacific**  
By U.S. Rep. Mike Lawler

**8 Taking a forward-leaning role in strengthening US-ROK defense cooperation**  
By Yong Sup Kim, LG Nex1

**10 Unleashing American energy dominance for us and our allies**  
By U.S. Rep. Bruce Westerman

**11 Strengthening relations and forging peace: The Federation of Korean American Associations™**  
By Myong H. Chong, FCAA

**12 Alaska's strategic role in a stronger US-Korea partnership**  
By U.S. Rep. Nick Begich

**13 Wyoming energy is a key component in securing the US-South Korea alliance**  
By U.S. Rep. Harriet Hageman

**14 Challenging new chapter opens for South Korean export powerhouse**  
By David R. Sands

**15 Shipbuilding success buoys South Korea**  
By David R. Sands



SPECIAL SECTIONS

Tony Hill  
DIRECTOR OF ADVERTISING  
& INTEGRATED SALES

Advertising Department:  
202-636-3027

Thomas P. McDevitt  
CHAIRMAN

Christopher Dolan  
PRESIDENT &  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Adam VerCammen  
CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER

Hope Seck  
SPECIAL SECTIONS EDITOR

Patrick Crofoot  
GRAPHICS SUPERVISOR

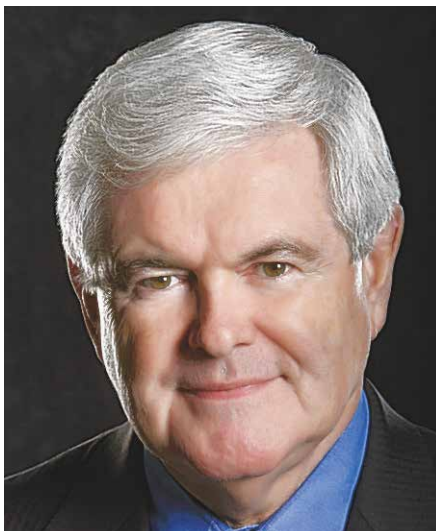
Special Sections are multipage tabloid products that run in The Washington Times daily newspaper and are posted online and in PDF form on its website. Sponsors and advertisers collaborate with The Times' advertising and marketing departments to highlight a variety of issues and events. Unless otherwise identified, Special Sections are prepared separately and without involvement from the Times' newsroom and editorial staff.



AP PHOTO/AHN YOUNG-JOON

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, center left, and his wife Kim Hye Kyung arrive to depart for Canada to attend the G7 summit, June 16, 2025.

# Strengthening the US-South Korean alliance



By Newt Gingrich

**P**resident Lee Jae Myung's visit to Washington this month is an important opportunity for the United States and the Republic of Korea to reaffirm their joint commitment to peace and security on the Korean peninsula.

South Korea is an extraordinarily important ally for the United States. It is the second-largest shipbuilding country in the world (after Communist China). Its shipbuilding industry can bring a lot of resources, knowledge, and technology to bear on solving the U.S. Navy's current crisis in ship building.

South Korea is a manufacturing powerhouse. It is the fifth-biggest

manufacturing economy – and the seventh-largest exporter – in the world.

As the South Korean economy has prospered, the country has taken on more of the economic burden of American defense of the peninsula. South Korea currently provides an estimated \$1.2 billion to offset the cost of American defense preparations in the region. This covers about one-third of the estimated \$3.5 billion the U.S. spends specifically to

structure and strategic calculations of Kim and his regime. So, it is vital that South Korea and the United States remain vigilant and maintain forces so strong that Kim knows it would be suicidal to launch an attack.

Second, the defense of Taiwan's independence – sufficient force to convince the Communist Chinese that they would lose in any attempted invasion – is greatly strengthened by the U.S.-Korean Alli-

is a major player in ensuring that the South China Sea remains open.

Given all these concerns – and the dramatic amount of extra economic, technological, and military power South Korea brings to the alliance – there are many reasons for the U.S. and South Korea to work together.

However, there is one emerging danger to the alliance. It is the new government's aggressive effort to jail and prosecute political opponents — and to attack and try to destroy religious groups in South Korea (many of whom are conservative and were supporting the opposition party).

Given President Donald J. Trump's own experience with the Biden administration trying to destroy him through judicial means – and given America's deep commitment to religious liberty – the new administration will almost certainly have to modify its behavior if the alliance is to continue to strengthen.

This combination of abusive police powers and efforts to destroy political opponents and religious leaders is the biggest cloud on the horizon for US-South Korean relations. The sooner it is resolved, the stronger the alliance will be.

This could be a productive visit for President Lee. It could continue the 75-year-old alliance which has brought peace and prosperity to the South Korean half of the peninsula.

.....  
Newt Gingrich is an author and 50th speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

**The combination of American, South Korean, and Japanese forces has maintained the peace on the peninsula for 72 years ... It is vital that South Korea and the United States remain vigilant and maintain forces so strong that Kim Jong Un knows it would be suicidal to launch an attack.**

defend South Korea and preserve peace and stability in a dangerous region. As the South Korean economy grows, that support is almost certainly going to increase.

One mutually profitable area of support would be for South Korea to build ships that America's Navy and Coast Guard desperately need.

South Korea is geographically important for three major American concerns.

First, it is vitally important for dealing with Kim Jong Un and the Northern Korean dictatorship. The combination of American, South Korean, and Japanese forces has maintained the peace on the peninsula for 72 years. We really do not understand the internal power

ance. It is made even stronger by Japan. The more the three nations can develop the capability to help defend Taiwan, the more likely it is that the communists will bluff and complain but avoid a military confrontation that they would surely lose.

Third, Korea, like Japan, has an enormous interest in maintaining freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. About one-third of all the world's maritime trade goes through this sea. That amounts to about \$3.5 trillion dollars a year of goods. Communist China for years has tried to exercise control of the South China Sea, and for years the U.S. and its allies have blocked that power grab. South Korea has a superb navy and



# South Korea: An indispensable ally



By Joseph R. DeTrani

**S**outh Korea's allied relationship with the U.S. since the July 27, 1953, Korean Armistice Agreement has brought peace and stability to the Korean Peninsula and to Northeast Asia.

North Korea's invasion of South Korea on June 25, 1950, was the beginning of a post-World War II Cold War. The Korean War was a bloody war, with over 37,000 Americans killed and 92,000 wounded and over one and a half million South Koreans killed or wounded. The armistice brought an end to the fighting, but not to the open hostility from North Korea.

Over the years, South Korea has been attacked and threatened by North Korea on multiple occasions: The Jan. 21, 1968 North Korean commando raid on the Blue House to assassinate President Park Chung-hee; the 1983 bombing in Rangoon, Burma to assassinate visiting President Chun Doo-hwan; the 1987 North Korean bombing of Korean Airlines Flight 858, killing 115 passengers and crew; and the March 2010 North Korean attack on the South Korean corvette, the Cheonan, that killed 46 sailors. These are just some of the provocations from a hostile North Korea.

Despite 72 years of a tense and threatening relationship with North Korea, South Korea has become a highly developed liberal democracy, with the world's tenth-largest GDP. Indeed, South Korea — the miracle of the Han River — is a model for all countries that care for their people and pursue socioeconomic and rule of law policies that benefit the people, not the ruling elite.

Since the Korean War, the U.S. allied relationship with South Korea — forged in the blood of Americans and South Koreans who fought for South Korea's independence — is unique, with over 28,500 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea and extended nuclear deterrent commitments from the U.S. to our South Korean and Japanese allies. Indeed, it



AP PHOTO/MANUEL BALCE CENETA

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, right, and South Korea's Foreign Minister Cho Hyun, walk toward the Treaty Room at the State Department in Washington, Thursday, July 31, 2025.

is the 1953 Mutual Defense Treaty with South Korea that effectively provides for security and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in the Indo-Pacific region.

The U.S. is South Korea's second largest trading partner, with two-way trade in 2024 exceeding \$197 billion. Since the Free Trade Agreement with South Korea was established in 2012, two-way trade has increased, and the overall trade relationship has become truly dynamic. South Korea exports mobile phones, semiconductors, automobiles, music and cinema to the U.S., with the U.S. providing South Korea with oil and gas, chemicals, machinery and transportation equipment. The per capita income in South Korea — \$34,640 according to the World Economic Forum — is one of the highest in East Asia. South Korea's transition from a low-income country in the 1960s and 1970s to a high-income country in a relatively short period of time speaks to their hard working and innovative workforce. Since the June Democratic Struggle of 1987 that ended authoritarian rule in South Korea and established a democratic system of governance, with emphasis on the rule of law, South Korea has developed into a vibrant and dynamic democracy — an aspirational model for the people in a growing number of autocracies that care less about their own people.

The story wouldn't be complete without mentioning South Korea's cultural impact on the global community. Their pop culture, with K-Pop, K-Drama and K-Beauty is now a global phenomenon, as is their cuisine, from kimchi to bibimbap. South Korea is not only developing into a model democracy with a dynamic economy and high standard of living for its people; it's also a country whose culture is positively influencing others.

The armistice that ended the Korea War in 1953 halted the fighting, but not the enmity North Korea has toward South Korea — and the U.S. In 2023, North Korea's Kim Jong-un memorialized in its constitution that South Korea and the U.S. are the enemies and that North Korea will build more nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles to deliver them.

North Korea's new mutual defense treaty with Russia, and the North Korean troops they sent to the Kursk region of Russia to participate in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, is a stark reminder that the new mutual defense treaty between Russia and North Korea commits each to come to the aid of the other in times of conflict. This theoretically could result in Russia coming to the aid of North Korea if there is conflict on the Korean Peninsula.

The United States' allied relationship with South Korea continues to bring peace and stability to the Korean

Peninsula and Northeast Asia. And it's the troops we have in South Korea and our extended nuclear deterrent commitments that resonate with North Korea and are a deterrent to an emboldened Kim Jong-un thinking that now, with the aid of Russia, he could incite conflict on the Korean Peninsula, with no consequences.

Hopefully, Kim Jong-un eventually will understand and appreciate the value of returning to dialogue — like the one his father and grandfather pursued with the Agreed Framework and the Six Party Talks — to end the enmity between the two Koreas and to work toward a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula, with a denuclearized Korean Peninsula and a North Korea also pursuing normal diplomatic relations with the U.S. That should be the goal.

.....  
*Joseph R. DeTrani is the former Special Envoy for Six Party Talks with North Korea and the former Director of the National Counterproliferation Center.*

*All statements of fact, opinion, or analysis expressed are those of the author and do not reflect the official positions or views of the U.S. government. Nothing in the contents should be construed as asserting or implying U.S. government authentication of information or endorsement of the author's views.*





# WE GO TOGETHER

Through the Summit, the Republic of Korea and the United States seek to reaffirm their steadfast alliance—an enduring bond forged by the shared sacrifice of 1.8 million war veterans and 3.3 million U.S. defense veterans.

As the Alliance evolves into a comprehensive strategic partnership, we hope this Summit will serve as a meaningful milestone in its continued advancement.

**KUSAF and KDVA Support the ROK-U.S. Summit and the Continued Development of the Alliance.**



**한미동맹재단**  
Korea-US Alliance Foundation



**주한미군전우회**  
KOREA DEFENSE VETERANS ASSOCIATION





SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

# Grateful for the unwavering US-South Korea Alliance



By U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C.

**T**he relationship between the United States and the Republic of Korea, an alliance forged in blood, over seventy years ago, remains one of the foremost strategic alliances today. In 1950, nearly two million Americans, and NATO allies from Türkiye to the United Kingdom to Norway, arrived in unfamiliar

lands to help liberate Korea from the scourge of communism and its oppressive hand.

The sacrifices made to secure the victory over communism on the Korean Peninsula will never be forgotten, and our relationship, rooted in shared values, will endure and grow.

July 27 marked the 72nd anniversary of the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement, ending the Korean War. Yet we will never forget that millions

contrast between these two civilizations. There could not be a more obvious difference between freedom and the tyranny of communism.

As a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Co-Chair of the Korea Congressional Caucus, I have visited South Korea several times, most recently in January of 2024. I know the Korean people to have a deep and unwavering affection for America. They revere the American

and cheap weapons in exchange for nuclearization materials and technological assistance.

Today, we are in a conflict we did not choose, of dictators who rule by gun, invading democracies who rule by law.

The economic relationship between the United States and the Republic of Korea is mutually beneficial and advances the supply chain resilience agenda of President Donald Trump.

In my home state of South Carolina, South Korea-based Samsung Group, established the company's first U.S.-based home appliance manufacturing facility, Samsung Electronics Home Appliances America, creating hundreds of jobs.

Over 800 American companies are registered with the American Chamber of Commerce in Korea, and Korean foreign direct investment in the United States continues to grow.

I am grateful for the unwavering U.S.-South Korea relationship.

*Rep. Joe Wilson is a member of the U.S. House of Representatives serving South Carolina's 2nd District.*

**The sacrifices made to secure the victory over communism on the Korean Peninsula will never be forgotten, and our relationship, rooted in shared values, will endure and grow.**

of Koreans in the north still live under absolute tyranny and poverty.

Contrast the per capita income in the Republic of Korea, over \$30,000 per year, compared with the impoverished north, at just \$1,000.

As the only member of Congress still serving to have been on a delegation to North Korea, I know firsthand the

military and are honored to host our troops today, helping to maintain Peace through Strength.

The people of South Korea are well aware of the threats across the lines of the 38th parallel. Kim Jong-un's regime gains tactical and technical battlefield experience in Ukraine, supplying war criminal Putin with cannon fodder





SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

# US-South Korean unity is communist deterrence in the Indo-Pacific



By U.S. Rep. Mike Lawler, R-N.Y.

**A**s China and North Korea grow bolder in their efforts to destabilize the Indo-Pacific, the United States, with President Donald Trump back at the helm as commander in chief, is positioned to lead a broader, bolder coalition of democracies that meets the moment we find ourselves in.

Three-quarters of a century ago, our soldiers fought shoulder to shoulder on the Korean Peninsula to repel communist aggression. Today, the threat posed by the totalitarian regimes of the Chinese Communist Party and North Korean government looms just as large, and just as dangerous.

The U.S.-South Korea alliance has

long stood as a pillar of peace in the region, but no single relationship, no matter how strong, can carry that burden alone. That's why I reintroduced the Indo-Pacific Treaty Organization Act this Congress: to lay the groundwork for a new multilateral security architecture that includes not only South Korea but also our other partners, Japan, Australia, the Philippines, Thailand, New Zealand, India, and more.

**There can't be any daylight between the United States and its democratic allies in the Pacific. That begins with our partnership with South Korea, and it means thinking bigger about how to strengthen our collective defense in the region.**

The Indo-Pacific Treaty Organization Act directs the president to establish a bipartisan task force to evaluate the feasibility of creating a NATO-style collective security alliance in the Indo-Pacific region. This task force will assess security threats from China and North Korea, explore whether a formal multilateral defense agreement among the U.S. and key allies can effectively deter aggression, and develop recommendations on how to strengthen coordinated defense and promote long-term unity rooted in our shared values.

Over seventy years after the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement, the contrast between North and South has

never been starker. While South Korea thrives as a democracy and global economic leader, the North remains trapped behind one of the last remaining walls of oppression.

As a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Congressional Korea Caucus, I've made clear that during my tenure, there can't be any daylight between the United States and its democratic allies in the Pacific.

That begins with our partnership with South Korea, and it means thinking bigger about how to strengthen our collective defense in the region.

The goal is not to militarize the Indo-Pacific, but to formalize and strengthen cooperation with allies who are already working in lockstep to maintain stability. South Korea is an indispensable partner in that effort, not only as a military ally, but as a global economic and technological leader.

The IPTO Act is about putting structure behind what our allies already know: the United States is stronger and the world is safer when we lead. History has shown that the world becomes a far more dangerous place when

America steps back from its responsibility as the leader of the free world.

This reality was most prevalent during my first overseas trip as a member of Congress in 2023, when I joined then-Chairman Michael McCaul, R-Texas, and a bipartisan group of House Foreign Affairs Committee members to visit South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. This trip reaffirmed our critical partnerships in the region and was a powerful reminder of what's at stake.

We are at an inflection point. As Beijing ramps up its military actions, threatens Taiwan, and deepens its coercive influence across the Indo-Pacific, Kim Jong Un continues to pursue nuclear weapons, launch missile tests near South Korea and Japan, and entrench ties with other rogue regimes. These regimes, inclusive of China, North Korea, Russia, and Iran, are increasingly aligned in their goal to dismantle the democratic order and diminish America's role in the world.

Our alliance has always sent a clear message to Beijing and Pyongyang, and it will continue to stand as a promise to future generations that freedom is worth defending and peace is worth preserving.

*Rep. Mike Lawler is one of the most bipartisan members of Congress and represents New York's 17th Congressional District, which is just north of New York City and contains all or parts of Rockland, Putnam, Dutchess, and Westchester Counties. He was rated the most effective freshman lawmaker in the 118th Congress, 8th overall, surpassing dozens of committee chairs.*



# Taking a forward-leaning role in strengthening US-ROK defense cooperation



**By Yong Sup Kim**

SEOUL — The journey of South Korean aerospace and defense company LIG Nex1 reflects a half-century of robust ROK-U.S. alliance and defense collaboration. Originally founded in 1976 under Gold Star (now LG Electronics) to support U.S.-furnished missile systems like the NIKE Hercules and HAWK, LIG Nex1 has grown into one of South Korea's leading companies in precision-guided weapons and integrated defense systems. Today, the company is outlining a broader approach to the United States. Rather than focusing solely on exports, LIG Nex1 is placing increased emphasis on industrial cooperation, shared standards, and sustained investment. The objective is to support collective defense while delivering capabilities better suited to operational needs in the Indo-Pacific.

This strategy draws on decades of alliance experience and responds to intensifying regional security demands. As allied forces seek to counter rapidly evolving threats, from swarming unmanned systems to long-range precision strikes, industry partners must provide solutions that are modular, interoperable, and resilient. LIG Nex1 is aligned with this shift, prioritizing combined readiness and practical integration over transactional engagements.

A key part of this effort involves building a long-term U.S. presence through local production, assembly, testing, and sustainment. These activities would support co-production of select systems, foster regulatory trust, and bring manufacturers closer to operational users. From a practical standpoint, that means designing to U.S. interface standards from the start, coordinating certification efforts early, and embedding lifecycle affordability into program planning.

These steps create mutual benefits. Localized supply chains increase resilience for U.S. and allied forces.



LIG Nex1 has all the business capabilities required throughout the life cycle of advanced weapons systems, from R&D to production and depot maintenance.

U.S.-based operations generate skilled jobs in manufacturing, quality control, and depot-level maintenance. They also allow for faster upgrades, as feedback from the field can be rapidly incorporated into deployed systems. This contributes directly to force readiness and responsiveness in times of crisis.

LIG Nex1's portfolio spans precision-guided munitions, seekers and sensors, data links, combat management, and system-of-systems integration. The company emphasizes open-architecture solutions that allow mission packages to be reconfigured across multiple platforms – surface, subsurface, air, ground, and unmanned – without extensive redesign. This modularity is increasingly important in domains such as counter-UAS, coastal defense, and networked strike, where performance must be weighed against cost, training requirements, and sustainment burden.

The company's consistent participation in major U.S. defense exhibitions, such as Sea-Air-Space and Modern Day Marine, demonstrates its commitment to transparent engagement with government, industry, and operators. These venues provide a forum to address integration pathways, cybersecurity, and export compliance. Such topics often determine whether promising technologies can be fielded at scale. These events also allow for the sharing of lessons learned from

allied exercises and comparative testing conducted under realistic conditions.

Program-level cooperation demands disciplined alignment. Timelines must be synchronized across procurement agencies, qualification protocols need to be harmonized, and supply chains must be capable of absorbing shocks. LIG Nex1 stresses lifecycle discipline in its design approach, focusing on manufacturability, sustainability, and upgradeability from the beginning. This is especially critical as systems become more software-defined and reliant on secure data exchange, common messaging standards, and cyber-hardened architectures.

As defense operations in the Indo-Pacific become more distributed and technology cycles accelerate, military forces will require capabilities that are attritable, adaptable, and seamlessly networked. Industry partners that can deliver rapid, reliable iterations will play an increasingly vital role. LIG Nex1 is positioning itself within this model: integrating quickly with U.S. and allied systems, complying fully with U.S. laws and technical standards, and investing in infrastructure that creates lasting value for both sides.

Transparency is a foundational principle in this effort. Addressing compliance and security requirements at the outset, whether related to ITAR or CMMC, builds confidence and enables

programs to move forward with fewer delays. For LIG Nex1, this approach reflects a long-term commitment to building credible, enduring partnerships. That means delivering on technical promises, meeting regulatory expectations, and communicating clearly about risks, milestones, and outcomes.

The company's strategy reflects a broader shift taking place in the U.S.-ROK defense relationship. More than ever, combined forces must train, deploy, and sustain operations together. This requires open interfaces, coordinated standards, and shared data where appropriate. It also demands an emphasis on lifecycle costs and sustainment planning from the outset. LIG Nex1 is advancing that agenda with its focus on integration, transparency, and long-term value creation.

As the United States refines its posture and acquisition priorities in the Indo-Pacific, defense firms that align with core objectives, such as interoperability, resilience, and speed to field, will be the most effective partners. LIG Nex1 is committed to contributing to this vision by building on alliance experience, expanding its industrial cooperation, and investing in the technologies that underpin deterrence and stability across the region.

.....  
*Yong Sup Kim is vice president of the Americas Representative Office for LIG Nex1.*





**THE FUTURE IS COMING.  
GET READY WITH **LIG****



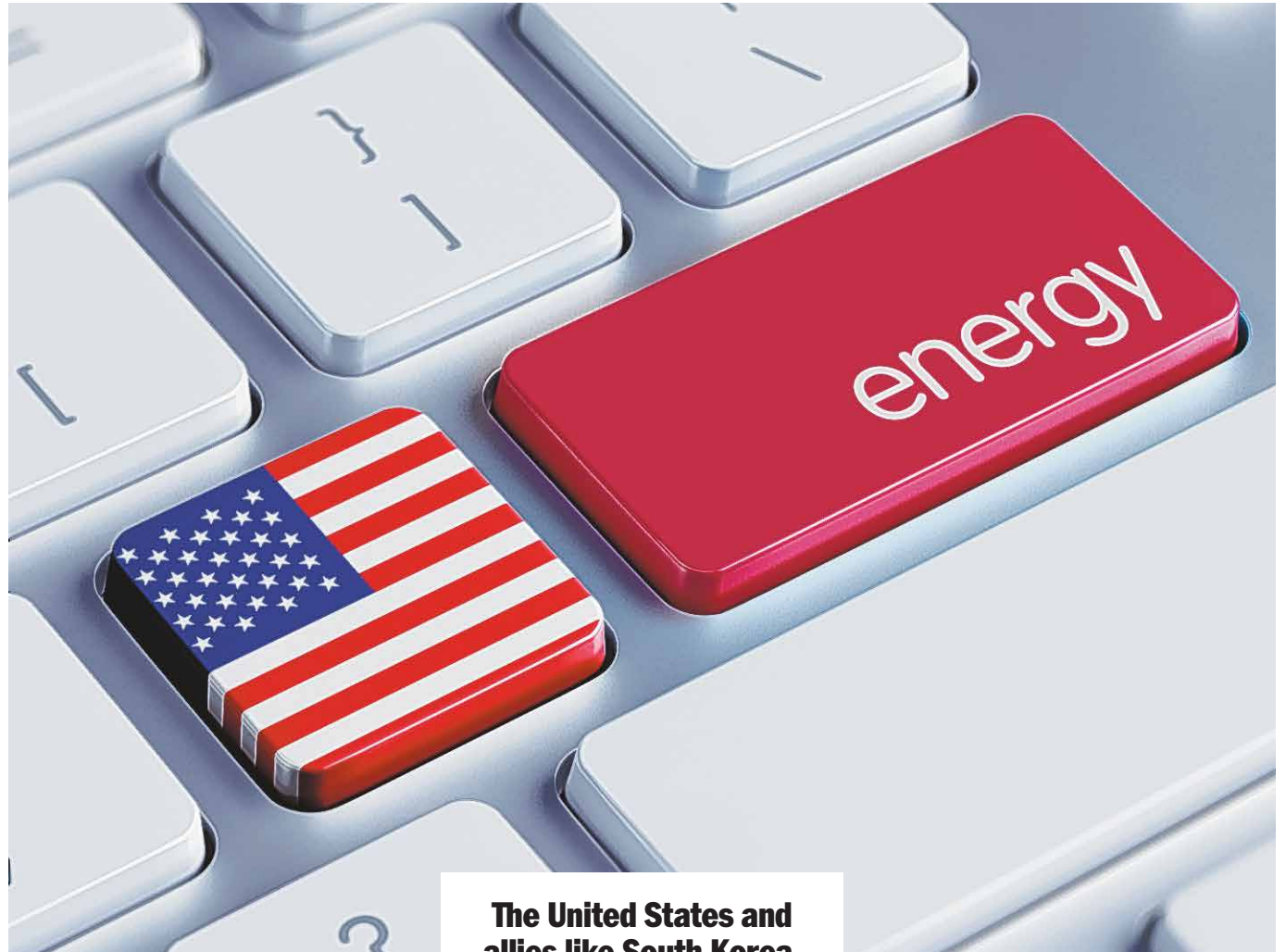
# Unleashing American energy dominance for us and our allies



By U.S. Rep. Bruce Westerman,  
R-Ark.

**U**nleashing American energy means utilizing our nation's abundant natural resources to stimulate domestic economic prosperity, create well-paying jobs and ensure access to affordable energy here at home. But the benefits don't stop there. By fully harnessing our domestic energy supplies, we can help secure the energy needs of our allies and actively combat the rise of foreign adversaries including the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The United States and allies like South Korea, fueled by America's energy resources, will be able to stand strong in their commitment to freedom and democracy worldwide, building a more prosperous future for everyone.

Recently, I saw this idea reinforced when I led a bipartisan congressional delegation (CODEL) to Japan, Taiwan and South Korea. Joined by my colleagues on the House Committee on Natural Resources, Harriet Hageman (R-Wyo.), Celeste Maloy (R-Utah), Nick Begich (R-Alaska), and U.S. Rep. Sarah Elfreth (D-Md.), our delegation represented districts across the country with a variety of natural resources that are powering our nation today and will do so into the future. From coal and liquified natural gas (LNG) to critical minerals and geothermal energy resources, our districts represented the diversity of America's natural resources and their potential. While on the CODEL, we met with government officials, business leaders, and members of the U.S. military who are supporting our allies and defending our way of life overseas. Our meetings emphasized the importance of American energy and natural resources to our allies and their role in powering the globe.



**The United States and allies like South Korea, fueled by America's energy resources, will be able to stand strong in their commitment to freedom and democracy worldwide, building a more prosperous future for everyone.**

In South Korea, our delegation frequently discussed the importance of American energy. We heard our allies express their desire to expand their use of American energy resources, reduce reliance on adversarial nations for energy, and invest in projects in the United States that will increase the American natural resources available worldwide. From harnessing and transporting Alaskan natural gas resources to market to developing geothermal resources in the American West, our allies know that investing in America is an investment in liberty and shared prosperity. However, they also emphasized the need for certainty in our federal permitting processes, ensuring that projects can be built rather than endlessly studied and litigated.

These conversations were timely, as the day before the CODEL departed, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. The new law enables extensive onshore and offshore oil, gas, and coal leasing nationwide, reduces royalty rates to incentivize production, and will ultimately lower energy costs for

Americans. The One Big Beautiful Bill Act also makes a downpayment on streamlining federal permitting processes and shortening project review timelines, responsibly speeding up energy projects.

In late July, I took the next step by introducing H.R. 4776, the Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act, a bipartisan bill to modernize federal permitting processes, shorten permitting timelines, and reduce frivolous litigation.

Taken together, these policies highlight the work House Republicans and the Trump administration are doing to provide certainty and stability for American energy producers and our allies. They will help the United States

meet its energy needs, secure our national security, and keep us energy-dominant for the benefit of our nation and allies. This is essential as we work to counter the growing malign influence of the CCP and other foreign adversaries.

South Korea and our allies in the Indo-Pacific are essential to defending democracy and freedom worldwide. We can support them in our shared mission by increasing their access to American energy, offering a vital alternative to energy supplies from adversarial countries, and thereby reducing the influence and power our enemies can exert. Unleashing American energy leads to a more prosperous future for the United States and the world. The moment is now to implement this work and solidify our place on the global stage as an energy-dominant nation.

*Rep. Bruce Westerman represents Arkansas' Fourth Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, where he serves on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and as Chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources.*



# Strengthening relations and forging peace: The Federation of Korean American Associations™

**By Myong H. Chong**  
**President, Federation of Korean American Associations (FKAA)**

**A**s a pioneer, humanitarian, first mover, and U.S. patent-holding inventor, I have dedicated my life to serving the Korean American community with a mother's heart for leadership — protecting our heritage, advancing opportunities, and building bridges between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

The Federation of Korean American Associations (FKAA) is a force for Korean Americans across the United States, committed to preserving culture, promoting civic engagement, and representing our community at the highest levels of diplomacy.

## **The Urgency of Unification**

For over 70 years, the Korean Peninsula has remained divided, separating families, restricting trade, and limiting the full potential of the Korean people. Unification is not simply a Korean issue — it is a matter of global stability, humanitarian progress, and economic opportunity.

A unified Korea would strengthen democracy in East Asia, open new avenues for commerce, and create lasting peace in a region marked by historical conflict. For Korean Americans, many of whom still have relatives in the North, unification is deeply personal.

The high-level meetings in the United between President Donald Trump and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung offer an important opportunity to keep unification on the global agenda and to remind the world that peace on the Korean Peninsula benefits all Indo-Pacific allies.

## **Indo-Pacific Allies and Security**

The Indo-Pacific is the geopolitical crossroads of our era. With rising tensions and evolving threats, the United States and its allies — including South Korea, Japan, Australia, and the Philippines — must act collectively to safeguard freedom of navigation, deter aggression, and foster prosperity.

South Korea's strategic partnership with the United States is an anchor for



**The Federation of Korean American Associations™ (FKAA) is a force for Korean Americans across the United States, committed to preserving culture, promoting civic engagement, and representing our community at the highest levels of diplomacy.**

regional security and a cornerstone of Indo-Pacific stability. The FKAA supports ongoing diplomatic engagement that reinforces these shared priorities.

## **The Importance of Intellectual Property**

In addition to military and diplomatic concerns, economic security is vital.

One of the most pressing threats to national strength is the theft of intellectual property (IP). As an inventor, I understand the importance of protecting IP for innovation, entrepreneurship, and global competitiveness.

The FKAA leads by example, having secured its own trademarks and intellectual property to preserve its mission and identity. By defending these rights, we not only protect our organization but also contribute to America's broader effort to maintain the rule of law in global commerce.

## **The Peace Medal: A Symbol of Transformation**

To honor extraordinary leadership in service to peace, the FKAA awards the Peace Medal — a prestigious recognition forged from bullets melted at the historic 38th Parallel, transforming symbols of war into symbols of peace.

Each recipient has demonstrated a commitment to liberty, security, and the principles of peace.

The work of the FKAA is made possible through the dedication of outstanding leaders within our organization. I extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Nishank Motwani, whose expertise in international security has shaped our strategies; Women's Executive Vice President Sara Miner, for her tireless advocacy for women; Vice President Baek Hyeon Kim, for his leadership in political engagement; IP Executive Vice President Sung Rim Heo, for his role in community outreach; Vice President Moon Jeong Sook, for her contributions; and FKAA members and former national presidents for their unwavering support.

As the FKAA looks toward the future, our priorities remain clear: strengthen U.S.-Korea relations, protect intellectual property, preserve cultural heritage, and advocate for Korean unification. I stand firmly behind their goals.

Korean unification is not just a dream — it is a strategic imperative for peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. The FKAA will continue to work with policymakers, community leaders, and UN international partners to make that vision a reality.

God bless America. God bless Korea.

.....  
*Myong H. Chong is president of the Federation of Korean American Associations (FKAA).*





SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

# Alaska's strategic role in a stronger US-Korea partnership



**By U.S. Rep. Nick Begich,  
R-Alaska**

**A**s the United States navigates an increasingly complex international landscape, it is imperative that we continue to reinforce partnerships with key allies. Our future prosperity and national security require strong, enduring partnerships with our partners in the Indo-Pacific.

When it comes to energy security and reliability for the United States, Alaska stands uniquely poised to serve as a linchpin in strengthening U.S.-Korea ties.

Earlier this year, I joined a bipartisan Congressional delegation to Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea to advance

dialogue on energy, trade, and security. In Seoul, our conversations with Korean officials were focused on both the opportunities and the urgency of deepening our economic and strategic collaboration.

South Korea, as the world's third-largest importer of liquefied natural gas (LNG), is actively seeking reliable, long-term energy solutions to diversify away from adversarial suppliers. Alaska's LNG project offers a historic

This isn't theoretical. Korea's Minister of Trade, Industry and Energy, Ahn Duk-geun, recently affirmed his country's intention to pursue cooperation with Alaska on the pipeline project. This partnership would unlock immense potential for both nations: for Korea, energy stability and growth; for the U.S., increased investment, job creation, and deeper relationships in the Indo-Pacific.

Alaska's geographic proximity to Asia provides a critical logistical advantage.

**When it comes to energy security and reliability for the United States, Alaska stands uniquely poised to serve as a linchpin in strengthening U.S.-Korea ties.**

opportunity to meet these needs, fortify our alliances, and bolster American national security.

Alaska's LNG project, a \$44 billion endeavor to build an 800-mile pipeline from the North Slope to export terminals, is both a strategic energy project and an important tool for stronger diplomacy. With the capacity to deliver 20 million tons of LNG annually and reach global markets by 2030, it offers our allies in Asia a dependable alternative to energy sources dominated by geopolitical rivals. By supplying Korea with clean, American-produced LNG, we can reduce its dependence on adversarial nations and ensure energy flows remain uninterrupted even in times of global tension.

Our shipping routes to Korea are shorter and more secure than other global suppliers, making Alaska the ideal partner for Korea's long-term energy needs. As President Donald Trump's executive order to lift restrictions on Alaska's resource-rich areas has shown, the U.S. is committed to unleashing our energy potential. We must now translate that commitment into action by ensuring Korea has every reason to invest in and benefit from this transformative infrastructure investment.

But the importance of this partnership extends beyond energy economics. It is about reinforcing the very fabric of our alliance. Energy security is national security. A Korea reliant on stable U.S. energy supplies is a Korea

less vulnerable to coercion from malign actors in the region. In turn, this allows both nations to focus on advancing shared democratic values, technological innovation, and mutual prosperity.

Alaska LNG also opens doors for collaboration on critical minerals and high-tech supply chains.

Historically, there has been little awareness that Alaska holds significant deposits of gallium, germanium, and graphite — resources vital to semiconductors and renewable technologies. By linking these resources to Korea's world-class manufacturing sector, we can build resilient supply chains that are less susceptible to external disruption.

There is a window of opportunity to act. Taiwan has already signed a letter of intent to purchase 6 million metric tons of Alaskan LNG, recognizing the project's promise. Korea's leadership now faces a choice: to step boldly into a partnership that promises energy security and economic growth or risk being left behind as others secure access to Alaska's abundant resources.

The time is now to invest and strengthen a U.S.-Korea alliance to unleash prosperity on both sides of the ocean. Alaska is ready.

*Rep. Nick Begich was sworn into Congress on Jan. 3, 2025. Nick's goal in Congress is to make sure Alaskans succeed. He is a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources, where he serves as vice chair of the Energy & Mineral Resources Subcommittee.*



# Wyoming energy is a key component in securing the US-South Korea alliance

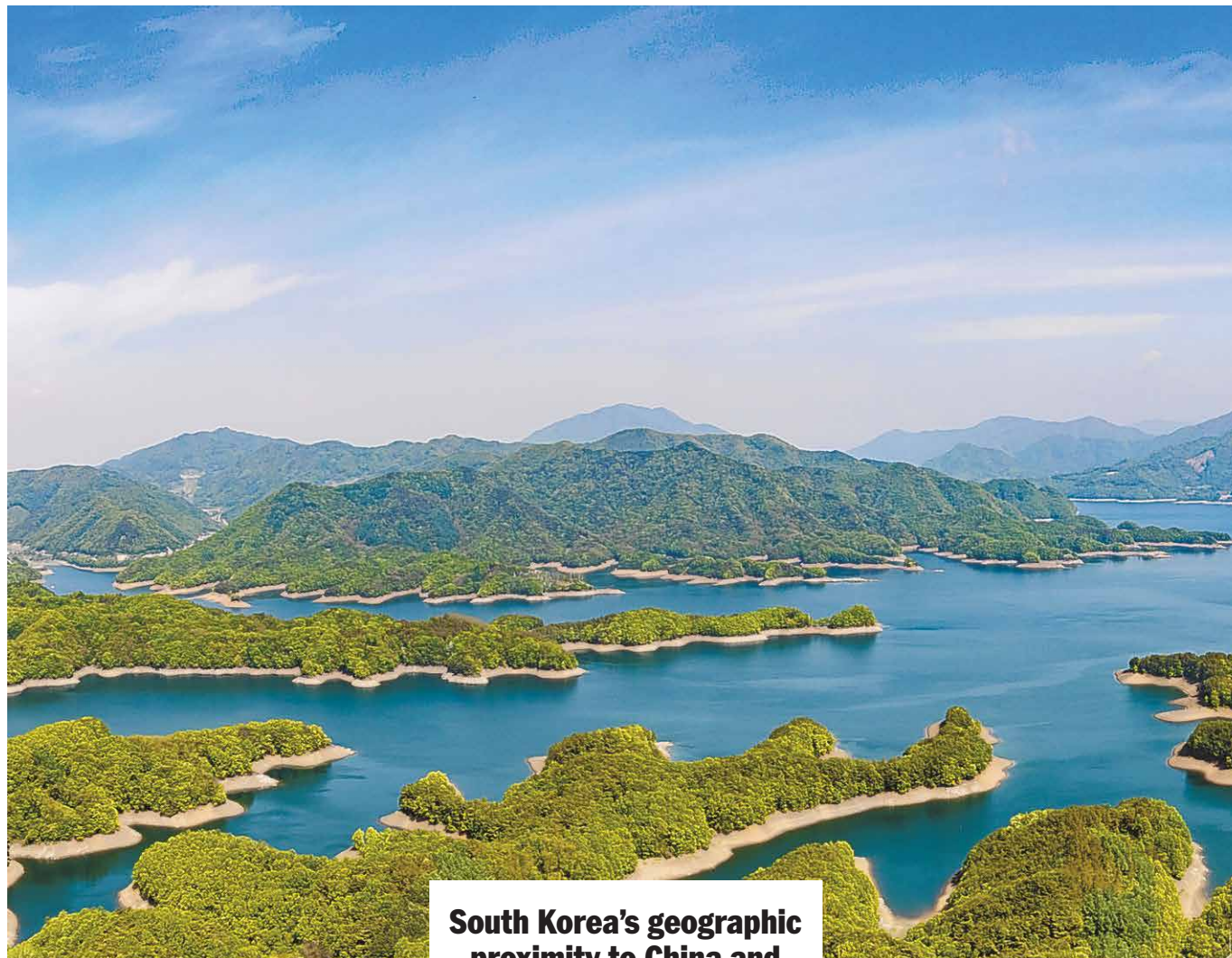


**By U.S. Rep. Harriet Hageman, R-Wyoming**

I recently had the distinct honor to join a House Natural Resources Committee Congressional delegation, or CODEL, to Japan, Taiwan, and Korea. Along with Chairman Bruce Westerman (R-Arkansas), Congresswoman Sarah Elfreth (R-Maryland), Congresswoman Celeste Maloy (R-Utah), and Congressman Nick Begich (R-Alaska), we met with allied foreign leaders and the business community to discuss a host of issues relating to our committee work and the state of Wyoming, including; forestry, energy, mining, resource development, fishing, and national parks.

South Korea is a country that has historically understood the value of free markets, sovereign decision-making, and the importance of standing strong in the face of growing threats from communist China and North Korea. These are not abstract geopolitical concerns; they are daily realities in this region. South Korea's geographic proximity to both adversaries means our alliance is not just symbolic, but it is strategic, necessary, and mutually beneficial.

South Korea relies on imported energy to fuel its economic engine. What we heard loud and clear from our meetings is that this region is eager to increase imports of reliable, affordable American coal and liquefied natural gas (LNG). Yet, American producers, particularly those in energy-rich states like Wyoming, are hindered by misguided federal and state policies that restrict access to export markets, particularly through our West Coast ports. Until resolved, restrictive policies driven by subservience to "climate change" politics in blue states along our western shores stands in the way of Wyoming and the U.S. realizing even greater economic opportunity, one which helps our allies in the process.



**South Korea's geographic proximity to China and North Korea means our alliance is not just symbolic, but it is strategic, necessary, and mutually beneficial.**

Wyoming's energy resources are among the most abundant and reliable in the world. Our coal is clean and abundant. Our natural gas is plentiful. We produce energy more responsibly and with greater regulatory transparency than any other nation on Earth. There is no reason why Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan should not be able to import our resources to meet their development and energy needs. Doing so would not only strengthen their national security but bolster the U.S. economy as well. It is a win for all involved.

In the entire Indo-Pacific region, the Chinese Communist Party continually pursues hegemonic control, and North Korea remains unpredictable under a dictator seeking global relevance. Regional security for our allies rests on a healthy defense relationship with the U.S. This is a true two-way partnership, as the U.S. receives in return an initial buffer between such regional threats and our homeland, in addition to a forward presence for our military bases to deter the CCP. In fact, we had the distinct privilege to visit U.S. troops stationed at the U.S. Naval Base Fleet

Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) to discuss the nature and importance of their work and to personally thank them for their service and sacrifice. We also had the opportunity to visit the Joint Security Area at Panmunjom and take a tour of the demilitarized zone (DMZ) between South and North Korea.

I am committed to deepening these partnerships -- not only for our defense and diplomatic ties, but also trade, resource development, and business-to-business collaboration. South Korea is an innovator in technology and manufacturing. Wyoming is a leader in energy and natural resource development. There is enormous potential in expanding our cooperation, and it is time we removed the roadblocks that stand in the way.

The trip we took was one of strengthening existing relationships and forging new ones. Building relationships with world political and business leaders will open even more opportunities for Wyoming's businesses. There is an ever-growing demand for Wyoming's reliable, affordable, and dispatchable energy resources. As we prepare for the future, the U.S. must continue to engage, to lead, and to insist on the ability to export prosperity to the world.

Rep. Harriet Hageman represents the state of Wyoming in the U.S. House of Representatives. She serves on the House Natural Resources committee where she is chair of the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries, and also serves on the Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources. Representative Hageman also serves on the Judiciary Committee and Subcommittee on the Constitution and Limited Government and the Subcommittee on the Administrative State, Regulatory Reform, and Antitrust. She has shown her support for American energy independence by serving as co-chair of the Congressional Coal Caucus.



# Challenging new chapter opens for South Korean export powerhouse

By DAVID R. SANDS

SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

It is the sunniest of times for South Korea's export-dependent economy — and the cloudiest.

With the United States and China as its two biggest overseas markets, South Korea has long punched far above its weight in the global trade rankings. With relatively low formal tariffs on imported goods and a high-tech economy deeply tied into global markets, South Korea ranked as the world's eighth largest exporting economy in 2023, with roughly 40% of its GDP tied to sales to overseas customers and governments.

Despite a highly uncertain domestic political environment and the ever-present threat from a nuclear-armed North Korea on its divided peninsula, South Korea has managed to create world-class domestic industries selling semiconductors and automobiles, petrochemical products and consumer electronics, and even cultural properties such as K-pop and prize-winning films and television series.

But because the South Korea economy has been so dependent on trade and an open global marketplace, the new Trump administration's push to re-balance America's trading position and attack what President Donald Trump calls economy-sapping trade deficits has hit Seoul particularly hard.

In the frantic run-up to the Aug. 1 deadline set by Mr. Trump to impose punitive tariffs on South Korean cars, consumer goods and other items, Seoul's hottest export commodity this summer may have been the stream of top trade, industrial and security government officials who descended on Washington, desperate to cut an agreement before Mr. Trump followed through on a threat to impose devastating 25% across-the-board tariffs on all South Korean imports.

In the end, Seoul's worst nightmares did not come to pass, as the two sides announced a deal to set the U.S. tariffs to 15% — comparable to what rivals in Japan and the European Union now face, while South Korea also pledged massive investments of



AP PHOTO/LEE JIN-MAN

New cars for export on a car carrier trailer arrive at a port in Pyeongtaek, South Korea.

\$350 billion in American shipping and another \$100 billion to purchase American liquefied natural gas (LNG).

So far only the vaguest outlines of the accord have been made public, including how the future investments will be targeted. Tariff rates on key South Korean exports such as pharmaceuticals and semiconductors also are unclear.

"Each side can claim some victories from this agreement," the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) said in an analysis of the pact. "... But there are still many items to be ironed out."

Even before the deal was announced, it was clear that stakes for South Korea's hugely successful export sectors were "enormous," according to Wendy Cutler, a longtime U.S. trade negotiator and now vice president at the Asia Society Policy Institute.

South Korea is an "export powerhouse that relies of access to U.S. markets for many of its key products, and it's also an important export destination for U.S. companies and farmers," Ms. Cutler told a recent online discussion forum organized by CSIS in the weeks of

frantic talks before a final deal was nailed down.

## Poor timing

The timing of a trade showdown with Washington could not be worse for Seoul, some trade experts say.

The new government of President Lee Jae Myung is just settling in after the country was engulfed in a constitutional crisis that led to the ouster of his predecessor, Yoon Suk Yeol.

Two-way trade between the U.S. and South Korea has been growing robustly in recent years, reaching nearly \$200 billion in 2024. Unfortunately for South Korea today, its trade surplus with the U.S. has also reached record highs — \$65.5 billion last year — and attracted Mr. Trump's particular anger.

And ironically, a much-touted bilateral free-trade accord negotiated under the George W. Bush administration and expanded in Mr. Trump's first term means formal South Korean tariffs on U.S. goods and services are already low or nonexistent — giving Seoul no bargaining leverage against U.S. market-opening demands.

Unlike their EU counterparts, South Korea also decided not to counter Mr. Trump's tariff

threats with new trade barriers against U.S. importers, apparently trying not to provoke Washington any more than necessary.

South Korean officials were also trying to cut a deal with Mr. Trump's aides alongside dozens of other nations facing the same Aug. 1 deadline, meaning that even scheduling a meeting with key U.S. officials says as U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer or Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick proved at times to be a logistical challenge.

Only adding to the uncertainty and anxiety in Seoul was the postponement in late July of the so-called "2+2" trade talks involving top ministers such as U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and South Korean Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Koo Yoon-cheol. At one point, Mr. Koo was reportedly already at Incheon International Airport preparing to board a flight to Washington when he learned the already-delayed talks were being put off once again.

The at-times chaotic nature of the trade talks has led some analysts to warn that the full impact of the agreement won't be felt or known for years to come. Whether it will have an impact on the significant South Korea bilateral trade

surplus with the U.S. looms as another large unknown.

Philip A. Luck, director of the Economic Program at CSIS, noted that the multi-faceted, multi-sector deal South Korea was negotiating with the Trump administration would likely include sensitive concessions in such areas as digital policy, agriculture, non-tariff barriers and even the nature and scope of the U.S.-South Korean military alliance.

"The idea that they can do all this over a few weeks is kind of comical," Mr. Luck told the CSIS forum.

Adding to the Lee's government's burden in the final days of the trade talks, Japan, its closest Asian competitor, weeks earlier had struck at least a framework of its own deal with the U.S., with Trump administration officials outlining a deal to cut Tokyo's tariffs to 15% and clear the way for hundreds of billions of dollars of Japanese investment in the U.S. economy.

The Japan announcement "really forced" the issue for Seoul, Ms. Cutler argued. South Korean negotiators could not go home with a worse deal than Japan, she said.

With few tariffs to cut, South Korean officials explored other ways to satisfy the new U.S. administration's demands for a more balanced economic relationship. Korean companies, they say, can offer struggling American counterparts aid and investment dollars in such critical industries as shipbuilding and semiconductors.

South Korean corporate giant Hyundai recently signed a deal with an American company to help build ships in Tampa, Fla., and Seoul officials say more such collaborative ventures are possible.

Bloomberg recently reported that President Lee held a string of private meetings in recent weeks with top South Korean conglomerates, including Samsung, SK, Hyundai Motor, LG and Hanwha, seeking pledges of larger investments in the U.S. market.

## Broadening the scope

South Korean officials say privately they resorted to a classic tactic at the bargaining table: trying to solve the problem by

» see **EXPORT** | C15



# Shipbuilding success buoys South Korea

By DAVID R. SANDS

SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

It might have been the best \$1 investment in South Korea's history.

In the mid-1980s, just as the country was embarking on its 40-year rise to global economic superpower status, the Seoul government targeted steel production and shipbuilding as "strategically important" sectors to develop. When a struggling Swedish shipyard filed for bankruptcy in 1987, the emerging conglomerate Hyundai swooped in and acquired the firm's nearly 500-foot Goliath crane for the nominal sum of \$1.

That crane towers to this day over Hyundai's giant shipyard in the southeastern port of Ulsan, a symbol of the stunning success of South Korea's shipbuilding sector in the global markets. In the succeeding decades, companies such as Hyundai Heavy Industries, Hanwha Ocean and Samsung Heavy Industries — aided by substantial government support — have become market leaders.

While China remains the clear leader in shipbuilding productions and services, vastly outpacing U.S. and European rivals, South Korea is a strong second, with nearly 18% of the global market share for "compensated gross tonnage" in 2024, according to Marineinsight.com.

And while they can't match China for sheer tonnage, South Korean shipbuilders have carved out a lucrative niche in several high-end specialized sectors, notably large crude oil and LNG carriers and offshore drilling platforms.

According to Reuters, South Korea's shippers accounted for 4% of the nation's exports and employ some 120,000 workers, with



SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

A view of a shipbuilding yard in Geoje, South Korea, one of the country's major shipbuilding hubs.

massive economic spin-offs for production centers such as Ulsan.

"Among U.S. allies, Korea stands out as the most capable partner" in shipbuilding, Lee Eun-chang, a researcher at the Korea Institute for Industrial Economics told a policy forum in Seoul this month.

South Korea's shipbuilding prowess was very much in the spotlight as the new Trump administration demanded a rebalancing of trade relations with Seoul and dozens of other countries around the globe.

President Donald Trump has contended that Washington enjoys significant leverage in the bilateral talks given the size and

attractiveness of the American market, but South Korea's shipbuilding expertise and success in challenging the Chinese juggernaut provided Seoul a valuable bargaining chip as the trade talks neared the Aug. 1 deadline this summer.

Although major details of the pact struck by U.S. and South Korean negotiators July 31 remain in flux, South Korea's shipbuilding industry proved a major asset in the talks. Under the deal, South Korea pledged to invest some \$350 billion to help bolster the American shipbuilding industry, a pledge that could also prove lucrative to some of South Korea's biggest players.

Mr. Trump, who signed an executive order in April calling for a "restoration" of America's "maritime dominance," has himself conceded that America's lagging domestic shipbuilding infrastructure will need help.

"We don't build ships anymore," Mr. Trump observed in January. "We want to get that started. And maybe we'll use allies."

Anxious to avoid punishing U.S. tariffs, the government of South Korean President Lee Jae Myung and South Korean business leaders openly played up the possibility of greater cooperation, technology transfer and investment by South Korean

shipbuilders in the U.S. as one way to address the large and growing U.S. trade deficit with South Korea.

"The United States feels a sense of crisis that China's market share in the shipbuilding sector is growing and is tapping Korea as a strategic partner," Trade Ministry official Chang Sung-gil said at a recent forum hosted by lawmakers.

Deals are already being struck: Hanwha Group last year paid \$100 million to acquire the Pennsylvania-based Philly Shipyard and this month announced an order for a new liquefied natural gas carrier that will be jointly built in the U.S. and in Hanwha's Geoje shipyard.

And HD Hyundai in recent days signed a preliminary accord with Los Angeles-based Edison Chouest Offshore, which operates 18 U.S. shipyards, to build new container ships.

Top ministers of the Lee government openly strategized as the U.S. trade negotiations went down to the wire, hinting strongly that shipbuilding would be a key piece of a new U.S.-South Korea trade pact.

"We confirmed a high level of interest from the U.S. in shipbuilding, so we decided to come up with proposals that the two sides can reach a deal about, including cooperation in shipbuilding," Mr. Lee's presidential office said in a statement after the gathering, according to the Korea Times.

Said presidential chief of staff for policy Kim Yong-beom: "Both sides reaffirmed the importance of cooperation in strategic manufacturing sectors, including shipbuilding and semiconductors, and agreed to work out concrete plans for such collaboration going forward."

## EXPORT

From page C14

making it bigger.

If Mr. Trump's longstanding unhappiness over the cost of U.S. military deployments on the Korean peninsula are wrapped into the talks, a deal just on the trade issues could be easier to reach.

"Tariffs and non-tariff barriers

are the core of the negotiations," a senior government official told the Chosun Ilbo newspaper as the final round of talks with heating up in July. "But we've also put security proposals on the table, including a defense spending increase tied to GDP, to find a broader 'landing zone' for agreement."

Despite the large hurdles and lack of public progress at times, South Korean officials and

many private analysts sounded increasingly optimistic in the final days that Washington and Seoul would cut a deal, if only because the alternative would have caused potentially catastrophic repercussions for the South Korean economy.

And with Mr. Trump buoyed by a string of strong recent reports on U.S. employment, growth and inflation, "the clock is not working in Korea's favor

right now," said Ms. Cutler.

But the veteran trade negotiator added the hazy "framework deals" that Washington is touting "will leave a lot of the details for future negotiations."

South Korean officials are also signaling that the July 31 announcement may be closer to the beginning of the process than to the end, despite the ominous warnings for South Korea exporters.

South Korean Minister for

Trade Yeo Han-koo, one of several Seoul emissaries who held high-level talks with U.S. officials in Washington in the run-up to the pact, told reporters, "I believe it's possible to reach an agreement in principle in the U.S. tariff negotiations, and then take some time to negotiate further."

"Twenty days are not enough to come up with a perfect treaty that contains every detail," he added.



# WELCOME PRESIDENT LEE JAE-MYUNG

## Access US Market Potential from Fairfax County, Virginia

**Meet Fairfax County, Virginia** - a place that provides unparalleled access to key decision makers at the axis of freedom and influence. The economic engine of the #1 Tech Hub in North America is strategically positioned just minutes away from Washington, D.C. and offers key market access for business.

With a globally and locally connected business community, the second largest office marketing in the country, industries at the forefront of cutting-edge technologies and research, and world-class talent to fill open roles, world-changers are already here - **where business comes to dent the universe.**

[Fairfaxcountyeda.org](https://Fairfaxcountyeda.org)

**FF** **Fairfax County**  
Economic Development Authority

