

KOREAN PENINSULA

# PEACE FORUM 2022

Canada's Role in the Korean Peninsula &  
the Indo-Pacific

Tuesday, October 18, 2022

9:00 AM – 16:00 PM

Delta Hotels Ottawa City Centre

101 Lyon St. N, Ottawa, ON K1R 5T9

In-Person & On-line



Organized by



The Peaceful  
Unification Advisory  
Council Toronto  
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# KOREAN PENINSULA PEACE FORUM 2022

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On Tuesday, October 18, 2022, the Peaceful Unification Advisory Council (PUAC) Toronto hosted the Korean Peninsula Peace Forum 2022 on the timely topic of Canada's Role in the Korean Peninsula and the Indo-Pacific. Partners on the forum included the Canadian Global Affairs Institute, the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada and the Macdonald-Laurier Institute.

Politicians, bureaucrats, policy-makers, think tank researchers, academics, non-profit and business leaders among others gathered in Ottawa and/or joined online to discuss policy recommendations on peace on the Korean peninsula. In particular, the panelists and speakers took stock of regional and global challenges, strengths and opportunities in Korean-Canadian relations, and discussed the potential role of Canada in the Korean peninsula.

The increasing ideological confrontation between the United States and China, precarious security environment, global economic downturn, and the heterogeneity of the Indo-Pacific region pose significant challenges towards achieving peace. But this moment of changing global order presents new opportunities for Canada to step up its role and commitment to the region as a middle power to mediate and facilitate peace through multiple channels of dialogue and relationship-building. But this will require us to look honestly at our diplomatic past and see our commitment to the region going forward with sincerity, humility and independence.

## CHALLENGES

North and South Korea want unification but each side wants unification on their own terms. The historical legacy and contemporary clash of interests, unification vision and plan are causing the current deadlock at the 38th parallel dividing the Korean Peninsula. But this rift is not an isolated issue. There are global and regional dynamics that have and are currently deepening the faultline. Some of the challenges outlined during the forum include:

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## 1) Increasing ideological nature of the confrontation

The forum comes at a time of increased geopolitical tensions between the United States and China, which are increasingly becoming ideological in rhetoric and approach cementing a wall using ideologies of democracy and autocracy to create an “us” versus “them.” This, in turn, is shaping the nature of confrontation, alliance-building, and strategy development. Just this week, news reports of China's President Xi Jinping addressing Canada's Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, in Bali speaks to the different ideologies of free speech and open dialogue between China and Canada

## 2) Precarious security environment

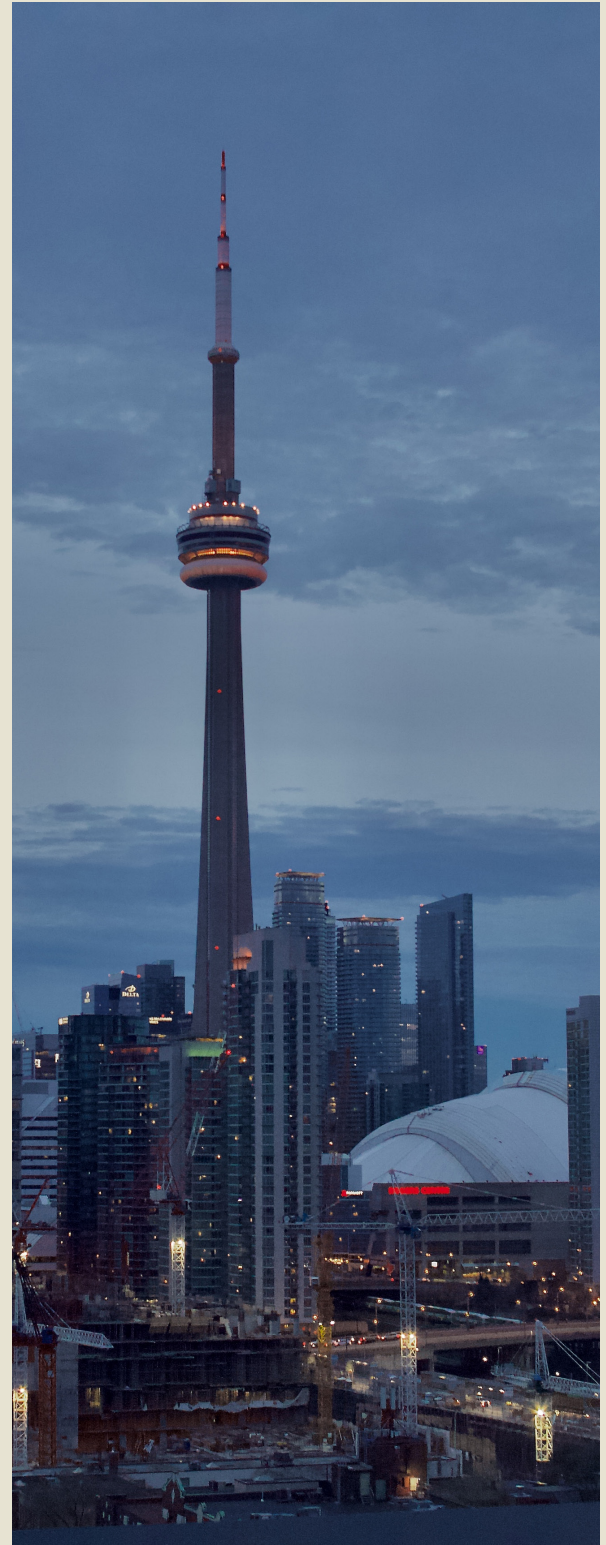
Since 1984 when North Korea started testing missiles, North Korea has tested more than 200 times. In 2022 alone, North Korea has tested more than 60 nuclear missiles. As a result of North Korea's nuclearization, public opinion in South Korea is swaying towards South Korea developing its own nuclear weapons. While the probability is low, Russia's use of nuclear weapons can further exacerbate trends in public opinion that can impact nuclear proliferation.

## 3) Global economic downturn

Many countries are in recession and many will tip into recession. Global energy prices are rising, causing further economic strain. Scarce resources will become even more scarce, forcing governments to make tough decisions on priorities with limited and stretched resources and capacity.

## 4) Heterogeneity of the Indo-Pacific region

Unlike Europe and the United States of America, the heterogeneity of the Indo-Pacific region poses difficulty in developing regional infrastructures for dialogue that help navigate the regional complexities in a sophisticated, effective, and on-going manner.



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## RECOMMENDATIONS

These are 10 recommendations for Canadian policymakers to consider as we reflect on and build strategy towards deepening Canadian-Korean relations.

### 1. Looking Honestly at our Past:

Canadian diplomatic engagement in the Indo-Pacific region has been erratic and Canada has not been always invited to the table on matters concerning the Indo-Pacific region. The time is now to articulate our commitments and match rhetoric with action.

### 2. Using Middle Power Diplomacy:

With our relatively good international standing, Canada can play a role as a mediator or a moderator—if invited by North and South Korea to do so— in the great power competition to facilitate peace on the Korean Peninsula rather than to passively jump on the bandwagon of the American initiative. Canada can also continue building blocks to serious defense and security relationships in the region for deterrence.

### 3. Developing Indo-Pacific Strategy:

A made-in-Canada Indo-Pacific Strategy is a priority to the Canadian government, which the Prime Minister and four Ministers are committed to developing and unveiling. In order to operationalize the strategy, it will be important that the policy framework is backed with an action plan and appropriate resources.

### 4. Moving away from Binary Thinking:

In the context of a multipolar world with multiple powers and voices in the region, from Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia, to South Asia and Oceania, including the Pacific Islands, it is important to use non-binary thinking to move beyond approaches that rely on narratives of “good” or “bad,” “rules-based order” or “rule-breaker,” and “democracy” and “autocracy,” to find alternative norms and multiple ways of relating and partnerships within the Indo-Pacific region.

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## 5. Sustained High-Level Political Engagement:

Minister Joly recently returned from South Korea, Minister Champagne is currently visiting, and Prime Minister Trudeau will visit next year. The Canadian government can keep up the drumbeat of political engagement to signal sustained leadership and commitment.

## 6. Engage with North Korea:

Whether by opening a mission in Pyongyang to setting up a liaison office to creative options that rely on civil society, engagement with North Korea matters. Truth-telling and relationship-building through people-to-people exchanges are critical for diplomacy.

## 7. Addressing Human Rights:

It is important to understand that regional and international security issues are intimately tied with human rights. We need a step-by-step approach to human rights as part of the larger strategy and roadmap for security in the region.

## 8. Offering Humanitarian Assistance:

Historically, one of the major engagements for Canada with North Korea is humanitarian assistance. This form of engagement should be considered wherever possible.

## 9. Leveraging Trade and Economic Partnerships:

South Korea and Canada can do more to leverage the Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement by deepening partnerships on supply chain resiliency, artificial intelligence, agriculture, and liquefied natural gas (LNG).

## 10. Moving Beyond Multilateralism:

Canada needs to get more nimble, creative and ambitious by relying on a multiplicity of channels for dialogue, such as regional forums, bilateral and mini-lateral relationships, and leading in a plus format to explore shared priorities. This will also require more regional literacy among diplomats and ambassadors.



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## FORUM VIDEOS

The video recordings of the Forum can be found at the links below.



### Opening

<https://youtu.be/cCCxj38PsfY>



### Keynote Address

[https://youtu.be/suLedd\\_eFOA](https://youtu.be/suLedd_eFOA)



### Session One

<https://youtu.be/CDnCk1CQTTM>



### Session Two

<https://youtu.be/2pSJ0UipfKc>



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## SPEAKERS



**Francois-Philippe Champagne**

*Minister of Industry, Science & Innovation*



**Jonathan Fried**

*Former National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister*



**Seong-Whun Cheon**

*Director, Korea Unification Research Center*



**Ho Young Ahn**

*Former Ambassador of ROK to the US*



**YoungJun Kim**

*Professor, Korea National Defense University*



**Trevor Kennedy**

*Vice President, Policy, Business Council of Canada*



**John Gruetzner**

*Fellow, Canadian Global Affairs Institute*



**Paul Thoppil**

*Assistant Deputy Minister, Asia-Pacific, Global Affairs Canada*



**Jonathan Miller**

*Director, Indo-Pacific, MacDonald Laurier Institute*



**Christopher Green**

*Professor, Korea Crisis Group, Netherlands*

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## ORGANIZING TEAM



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## PHOTOS



Organizing Team



Organizing Team and Speakers

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Hon. Francois-Philippe Champagne - Minister of Industry, Science & Innovation



Ho Young Ahn - Former Ambassador of ROK to the US

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Session one panel speakers



Session two panel speakers

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Guest speakers



Guests

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Guests



Former Ambassadors of Canada to ROK and former MP

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Hon. Francois-Philippe Champagne and Yeon Soo Kim - Head of PUAC Toronto Chapter



PUAC video and audio team