

2024 Election:

**Harris vs. Trump:
on Korea Policy**

Presented by KPNGN Korea Peace Study Group, 9/2024

Introduction

In this presentation, we will focus on the two major presidential candidates, Vice President Kamala Harris (D) and former President Donald Trump (R), who are dominating in the 2024 presidential election campaign at this time.

The slides will include their past relations with Korea, their statements on Korea, their campaign and party platforms, and experts' views on their future policy on Korea.

We hope this presentation will be helpful in increasing your understanding of their past interactions with Korea as well as their expected future policy on Korea.

Content

1. Vice President Harris' Record and Statements
2. Harris Campaign Website & Democratic Party Platform
3. Former President Trump's Record and Statements
4. Trump Campaign Website & Republican Party Platform
5. Expert Views on the Future U.S. Policy on Korea
6. Conclusion
7. Q&A

A photograph of Kamala Harris speaking at a podium. She is wearing a blue blazer over a light-colored top. Her hair is styled in wavy brown tones. The background features a blurred American flag. The name 'Harris' is written in large, bold, yellow font on the right side of the image.

Harris



Korean DMZ, Sept 29, 2022

Panmunjom
Sept. 29



1. Vice President Harris' Record and Statements

Statement at the Korean DMZ, 9/22/2022

THE VICE PRESIDENT: So, the United States shares a very important relationship, which is an alliance with the Republic of North Korea. And it is an alliance that is strong and enduring. And today, there were several demonstrations of just that point.

Here you see, at the DMZ, U.S. soldiers serving shoulder-to-shoulder with soldiers from the Republic of Korea. They are training together. They are committed to working in solidarity around a shared purpose and goal, which is to maintain the security and the stability of this region of the world.

I cannot state enough that the commitment of the United States to the defense of the Republic of Korea is ironclad and that we will do everything in our power to ensure that it has meaning in every way that the words suggest. This includes our extended deterrence commitment, which is supported by the full range of U.S. military capabilities, again, as demonstrated right here before you.

But in regard to the threats posed by the DPRK, as I told President Yoon, we are aligned on this issue. The DPRK has a ballistic missile launch program, apparently, including just yesterday, and are destabilizing the peace and security of this region.

Our shared goal — the United States and the Republic of Korea — is a complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

The alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea was forged in shared sacrifice during the brutal Korean War. Let us remember, Americans and Koreans fought and died together for freedom and for liberty. Thirty-six thousand U.S. service members lost their lives. A hundred and thirty-seven thousand Korean soldiers lost their lives, as did millions of innocent civilians.

Nearly 70 years since the Korean Armistice, the threat of conflict remains. And we are reminded that the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea stands ready to address any contingency.

The commitment of the United States to the defense of the Republic of Korea, I will report, is ironclad. Today more than 28,000 U.S. service members serve shoulder-to-shoulder with our allies here to deter DPRK aggressions and to protect the Republic of Korea and the American people.

I just had an opportunity to meet with several of these brave and highly dedicated and skilled soldiers, and I will tell you what I told them: America benefits from their service every single day.

The DMZ also reminds us of the dramatically different paths that the two sides took from those early days. Over the past seven decades, it has been clear: In the south, we see a thriving democracy, innovation, economic prosperity, and strength, a powerhouse — dare I say — on many of these issues, and a force for good in the world. **In the north, we see a brutal dictatorship, rampant human rights violations, and an unlawful weapons program that threatens peace and stability.**

The United States and the world seek a stable and peaceful Korean Peninsula where the DPRK is no longer a threat.

We will continue to work alongside our partners here and everywhere as is necessary to maintain stability and peace in this region.

(from White House website)

Harris' Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speech



NORTH KOREA

"I will not cozy up to tyrants and dictators like Kim Jong Un"

Harris' comment about Korea during 2024 Presidential Debate on September 10, 2024:

“It is well known that he (Trump) exchange(d) love letters with Kim Jong Un.”

2. Harris Campaign Website & Democratic Party Platform

from Kamala Harris Campaign Website

“Stand With Our Allies, Stand Up to Dictators, and Lead on the World Stage”

Asia-Pacific

“Vice President Harris has been a tireless and effective diplomat on the world stage. She has met with China’s Xi Jinping, making clear she will always stand up for American interests in the face of China’s threats, and traveled to the Indo-Pacific four times to advance our economic and security partnerships.

She visited the Korean Demilitarized Zone to affirm our unwavering commitment to South Korea in the face of North Korean threats.”

(<https://kamalaharris.com/issues/>)

from 2024 Democratic Party Platform

Chapter Nine: Strengthening American Leadership Worldwide

“Under President Biden’s leadership, the United States hosted a historic trilateral Camp David Summit with Japan and South Korea, enshrined the Washington Declaration with South Korea, and extended trilateral deterrence discussions with Japan....

President Biden has also worked alongside our allies to counter the threat posed by North Korea's destabilizing development of nuclear and missile programs, in violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions. **By bolstering our trilateral cooperation with South Korea and Japan, we are maintaining peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula and beyond.**

Trump took a different approach in the region, embarrassing the United States on the world stage including by flattering and legitimizing Kim Jong Un, exchanging "love letters" with the North Korean dictator. Trump directly threatened our valued ally South Korea with the withdrawal of U.S. troops stationed there over a trade dispute.* President Biden has and will stand by our allies, especially South Korea, against North Korea's provocations, including its illegal build-up of missile capabilities.”

*(*This is misleading, because it was a dispute about the amount of SK’s support payment for the presence of US. troops in SK.)*

(<https://democrats.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/FINAL-MASTER-PLATFORM.pdf>)

Trump



3. Former President Trump's Record and Statements

A) Joint Statement from 1st US-DPRK Summit, Singapore, June 12, 2018

1. The U.S. and the DPRK commit to establish new U.S.–DPRK relations in accordance with the desire of the peoples of the two countries for peace and prosperity.

2. The U.S. and the DPRK will join their efforts to build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.

3. Reaffirming the April 27, 2018 Panmunjom Declaration, the DPRK commits to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

4. The U.S. and the DPRK commit to recovering POW/MIA remains, including the immediate repatriation of those already identified.



B) 2nd Summit, Hanoi, Vietnam, Feb. 27-28, 2019

On the second day, after some negotiations in the morning, the meeting ended abruptly.

“Hours later, in a rare move, North Korean officials called a news conference. Ri (FM) offered a different account of his country's position compared to Trump: **North Korea had only proposed a partial lifting of sanctions**. He stated that North Korea wanted 5 out of 11 sanctions originally imposed by the United Nations in 2016 and 2017 lifted; in exchange, Ri said that North Korea offered to "permanently and completely" dismantle its primary nuclear facility in Yongbyon, and that **American experts would be allowed to observe.**

Ri also quoted North Korea as proposing to put in writing that the country would end all nuclear tests and long-range missile tests. He said that the North Koreans saw that no agreement could be made after the United States demanded one further measure in addition to destroying the Yongbyon nuclear facility.”

(Wikipedia)

C) 3rd Summit, Korean DMZ, June 30, 2019

“Following the conclusions of the 2019 G20 Osaka summit in Japan, on June 30, 2019, Trump and South Korean president Moon Jae-in visited the DMZ before the meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. **Kim invited Trump to cross the border line, and Trump briefly crossed in North Korea before crossing back into South Korea together with Kim.**^{[22][24]} **Trump thus became the first sitting U.S. president to enter North Korea**..... Moon later joined Trump and Kim, and the three spoke for a brief moment^[28] before **Kim and Trump held a 53-minute-long private meeting inside the Freedom House**.....

On October 5, U.S. and North Korean officials held working-level nuclear talks in Stockholm, Sweden, but did not reach any agreement.”

D) Trump's Interview with *TIME* magazine, April 12, 2024

Q: “Would you withdraw troops from South Korea?”

A: “Well, I want South Korea to treat us properly. As you know I got them to - I had negotiations, because they were paying virtually nothing for 40,000 troops that we had there...And we have 40,000 troops that are in a precarious position. And I told South Korea that it's time that you step up and pay. They've become a wealthy country. We've essentially paid for much of their military, free of charge... And they agreed to pay billions dollars to the United States for our military being there. Billions, many billions.”

(*TIME*, April 30, 2024)

E) Trump's Speech at 2024 RNC, July 19, 2024

“...Then there is an international crisis the likes of which the world has seldom seen. War is now raging in Europe and the Middle East, a growing specter of conflict hangs over Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines, and all of Asia, and our planet is teetering on the edge of World War Three, and this will be a war like no other.

It is time for a change. We simply cannot sustain four more years of this administration....

I was the first president in modern times to start no new wars....

We defeated 100 percent of ISIS in Syria and Iraq, something that was going to take five years, and I did it in two months. I stopped the missile launches from North Korea....”

(NBC Boston)

F) Trump's Campaign Speech, Johnstown, PA, August 30, 2024

WASHINGTON, Aug. 30 (Yonhap) -- Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump said Friday that "getting along" with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is a "good thing," after his Democratic rival Kamala Harris vowed not to "cozy up to" dictators like Kim...

“I got along with Kim Jong Un of North Korea. Remember I walked over...the first person to ever walk over from this country,” he said, apparently referring to his visit to the inter-Korean border village of Panmunjom in June 2019, where he briefly crossed the Military Demarcation Line into the North.

“We also looked at his nuclear capability. It's very substantial... You know, getting along is a good thing. It's not a bad thing,” he added.

(Yonhap News, ROK, Aug. 31, 2024)

4. Trump Campaign Website & Republican Party Platform

A) from His Campaign Website

<Agenda 47>

8. **Prevent World War Three, restore peace** in Europe and in the Middle East,...

12. **Strengthen and modernize our military, making it, without question, the strongest and most powerful in the world.**

(www.donaldjtrump.com/platform)

B) 2024 GOP Platform

--The **Preamble** restates Trump's Agenda 47, including No. 8 and 12.

--The main foreign/military policy of the GOP Platform is present in the **Chapter Ten, Return to Peace Through Strength:**

1. The National Interest

“Republicans will promote a Foreign Policy centered on the most essential American interests, starting with protecting the American Homeland, our people, our borders, our Great American Flag, and our Rights under God.”

(continued in next slide)

3. Strengthen Alliances

“Republicans will strengthen alliances by ensuring that our Allies must meet their obligations to invest in our Common Defense and by restoring Peace to Europe. We will stand with Israel, and seek peace in the Middle East....

Likewise, we will champion Strong, Sovereign, and Independent Nations in the Indo-Pacific, thriving in Peace and Commerce with others.”

5. Defend America’s Borders

6. Revive our Industrial Base

“...Equipment and parts critical to American Security must be MADE IN THE USA.”

(<https://gop.com/about-our-party>)

5. Expert Views on the Future U.S. Policy on Korea

A) What Would Kamala Harris Do on North Korea?

By Daniel R. DePetris, *The National Interest*, Aug. 23, 2024

“Harris won’t have much to work with, so she is likely to take the path of least resistance by putting Biden’s North Korea policy on auto-pilot.....Expect more visits by U.S. nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines in South Korean ports, more fly-overs of the Korean Peninsula by strategic assets like the B-2 bomber, and more talking points about why nothing short of a disarmed North Korea is acceptable.

If the U.S. wants to make progress on the North Korean file, it needs to tailor economic and political concessions to realistic asks that the North Koreans might accept such as suspension of North Korean nuclear and ICBM tests, re-entering the 2018 military de-escalation accord with South Korea and working...specifically on risk-reduction measures that will minimize the prospects of conflict. The alternative, adopting the same old stance, is no alternative at all.”

(Daniel R. DePetris is a Fellow at Defense Priorities)

B) How Would a Harris Administration Deal With North Korea?

By Mitch Shin, *The Diplomat*, Aug. 12, 2024

Considering then-President Trump's moves on North Korea in 2018 and 2019, it is likely that he would try a top-down approach again to directly negotiate with the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Un. We might see an updated version of his strategy on North Korea centered on arms control or nuclear program freeze, as his “all or nothing” strategy did not work out in Hanoi in 2019 and he may already see the denuclearization of North Korea as a mission impossible....

Harris' views on North Korea appear to be in line with Biden's practical approach, which in turn is no different from the Barack Obama administration's “strategic patience.” Like other Biden administration officials, Harris has called “the complete (de)nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula” a shared goal of the U.S. and South Korea.”

6. Conclusion

One of the most important issues for the American voters, especially for the Korean Americans and Americans working in Korea, to consider in this election is the **Forgotten War (Korean War), still going on between the U.S. and North Korea.**

This Forever War in Korea, with some **“40,000” (or 30,000) U.S. troops stationed in South Korea, is very costly and dangerous,** not only for the Korean people but also for the American people in general, because any new armed conflict there may well escalate into a horrendous nuclear war.

Unfortunately, the major media ignore the Korea issue in this election, while paying much attention to the Ukraine-Russian War and the Israeli-Palestine conflict. For instance, the moderators in the first presidential debate on Sept. 10 did not ask any question on the Korea issues, although Harris briefly ridiculed Trump for his exchange of “love letters” with Kim Jong Un.

This is why it is very important for the American voters to understand the Korea policy of the two leading presidential candidates, Harris and Trump, in this election. **There is a major difference in the two candidates' approach to North Korea in particular. If elected, Trump is likely to reach out to the North Korean leader for further dialogue in the future, while Harris will probably continue the present Biden policy of isolating, sanctioning, and threatening North Korea. In her speech at DNC, she vowed not to "cozy up to...dictators like Kim Jong Un."**

The stakes are high and the race is very close. Perhaps, the Americans working for peace in Korea can affect the outcome of this year's presidential election to a certain extent, if we can unite on one Presidential candidate who can possibly end the Forgotten War or reduce military tensions in Korea at least.

Thus, **it is critical for all of us to participate in this election process and cast our vote.** If you are a U.S. citizen, are you registered to vote? If so, please make sure that you vote early or by Nov. 5, the election day. **Let's elect the best candidate who can help ending the Forever U.S. War in Korea!**



Elect a Peace Maker!