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<https://www.uskoreaconnect.org/blog/2020-US-Election-Implications>

Title

The U.S. Election and its Implications for South Korea

Blog

When Americans go to the polls this week to decide whether Donald Trump or Joe Biden will lead the nation as president, there will be a significant impact on South Korea and its relationship to the United States. And most of that focus could be on the U.S.-South Korean relationship.

As a vibrant, modern, thriving democracy, South Korea stands in stark contrast to the closed, authoritarian dictators of North Korea. Many South Koreans clearly prefer President Trump for reelection, even in the face of pressure from the Trump Administration to abandon him.

Joe Biden, on the other hand, will be far more focused on human rights abuses and a more traditional approach to foreign policy. According to a Gallop poll last summer, more South Koreans disapprove of President Trump's performance in office than approve. In 2019, South Koreans were generally excited about the prospect of finally ending the Korean War.

Yet, while other public opinion surveys found widespread support for talks between the U.S. and North Korea, there is still a strong belief in the "right thing" in global affairs.

Outside of the nuclear negotiations, South Korean experts expect that a second Trump Administration would "double" U.S. aid to South Korea. They also believe the White House under Trump would attempt to resolve the rivalries between the U.S. and China. Some speculate that the Moon Administration would seek more distance from the U.S. in its second term.

If Joe Biden wins the election, restoring credibility with America's global allies will be a top priority on the global agenda. Biden's prospects of eliminating nuclear weapons from the Korean peninsula or accepting some level of weapons in the region will be a key focus.

In either case, the U.S. and South Korea's relationship will continue to evolve.

Date

11/2/20