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# The PCI News



## Project Bridge Graduation



(Top Left: PCI Board Member, Gregory F. Treverton with Project Bridge Youth Ambassadors, CA State Senator Dave Min, ROK Consul General Park, Mary Broude, Friends of Korea on July 21, 2021, Los Angeles, CA; Top Right: Senator Dave Min delivering his keynote speech on July 21, 2021, Los Angeles, CA); Bottom Right: Collage of Youth Ambassadors participating in in-person and virtual activities, Los Angeles, CA)

The 2019-2021 Project Bridge cohorts enjoyed and celebrated their Project Bridge graduation at the Korea-US Friendship Night hosted by the Consulate General of Republic of Korea in Los Angeles at the Consul General Park Kyung Jae’s residence on Wednesday, July 21, 2021. The Youth Ambassadors were warmly welcomed by Consul General Park with his welcoming remarks followed by congratulatory remarks by Spencer Kim, Co-founder, Pacific Century Institute and Mary Broude, Friends of Korea. The program proceeded with a special keynote speech by California District 38 Senator Dave Min, addressing the current issue of anti-Asian hate crimes that has been on the rise since the beginning of Covid-19. To conclude, Youth Ambassador Faith Chang, shared her program reflection.

The 2019-2021 cohorts were unable to participate in the fully funded ten-day study tour to South Korea to enhance intercultural awareness due to the ongoing global Covid-19 pandemic. However, they had the opportunity to virtually meet with *Daedong* Taxation High School and *Jeonbuk* Foreign Language High School students and participate in virtual events with special guest speakers: Dr. Edward Park, Loyola Marymount Univ.; Dr. Jieun Baek, Harvard Univ., Laurel Kendall, Columbia Univ.; and more.

The Youth Ambassadors were awarded a life-time membership to Friends of Korea organization to have opportunities for ongoing engagement with Korea, Koreans, and Korean Americans through Friends of Korea activities.



## Board Member’s Opinion Editorial

*This opinion piece featuring PCI board member, William H. Overholt published in the Hill on July 7, 2021.*

### Biden cannot counter China with a team that lacks expertise



By William H. Overholt

President Biden’s foreign policy team says China is the priority, but the team lacks China expertise. Other than trade experience at the Office of the United States Trade Representative, Biden’s Cabinet has no China expertise. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has worked on issues involving Europe, Canada and the Middle East. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has a distinguished

career as a general in Iraq and as leader of U.S. forces in the Middle East. National security adviser Jake Sullivan’s biography highlights work on Libya, Syria, Iran and Myanmar.

Biden’s lead candidate for ambassador to Beijing continues the pattern. Nicholas Burns has served in the Middle East and Europe. An Indiaphile and Sinophobe, he lacks China experience and disdains China experts with more complex views. I’m a lifelong Democrat who criticized George W. Bush’s foreign policies. But Bush had outstanding success with U.S.-China relations. He gained enduring respect and appreciation from both Beijing and Taipei. He strongly supported Taiwan but forbade dangerous Taipei provocations. He managed difficult problems, starting with the downing of a U.S. surveillance plane on Hainan. Bush’s China success was created by his team — notably, Hank Paulsen at Treasury, Dennis Wilder at the National Security Council, and Sandy Randt as ambassador. They knew China.

Presidents Obama and Trump lacked top-level China expertise and their Asia policies were successive fumbles. Obama’s team idled while North Korea built nuclear weapons. He sacrificed U.S. allies’ confidence by failing to defend Scarborough Shoal, validated the Japanese breaking of a four-decade peace understanding over the Senkakus, used phony arguments in failed opposition to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and invested too little, too late in the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Trump’s record was worse.

Below Cabinet level, Biden’s key Asia officials are Kurt Campbell at the National Security Council and Ely Ratner at the Department of Defense. State’s Sung Kim is rock-solid but less prominent. Neither Campbell nor Ratner has deep, direct experience with China. Obama’s Asia failures happened on Campbell’s watch. Campbell and Ratner are famous for a

2018 Foreign Affairs article asserting that U.S. engagement with China has failed because it assumed that engagement would make China a liberal polity — fatuous historical revisionism based on out-of-context quotes. Congressional testimony shows that all key engagement decisions hinged on national security and economic risks and opportunities, uneasily mixed with moral opprobrium. The Campbell-Ratner misrepresentation of history should have disqualified them from their current government positions.

Campbell’s primary contribution under Obama was “the pivot” to Asia, a conceptually valid shift of U.S. resources away from the Middle East and South Asia to East Asia. The Middle East focus of Biden’s team so far proves the pivot’s strategic failure. The pivot’s biggest contribution to U.S. strength was the pitiful shift of a couple thousand U.S. troops to northern Australia, but its management provoked Beijing to anticipate a major strategic challenge — a big net loss for the United States.

The Biden team’s record on Pacific Asia has been a series of missteps. Blinken’s antagonism in Anchorage played well domestically but could hamper productive dialogue for years. Blinken called Taiwan a “country,” although his professional colleagues walked that back; someone who understood China would never make that gaffe. Biden’s policy toward North Korea lacks substance and is hopeless without a China dimension. Blinken half-snubbed the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which holds the balance of Chinese and American power in Asia, by offering their meeting only an in-flight video conference because he gave priority to a Middle East meeting — and then he couldn’t make the meeting technology work.

Blinken has warned countries not to accept Chinese infrastructure loans, lest China end up owning the projects, echoing the falsehood put forth by former Vice President Mike Pence and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo that Beijing lends money inappropriately so that it can seize collateral. In more than a thousand African loans, Beijing has never seized collateral and never sought to take advantage of a squeezed borrower. The Pence citation of a 2017 Chinese lease agreement with Sri Lanka’s Hambantota port was such a distortion that some scholars call it a lie.

The Biden administration does not know how to be tough but not provocative on Taiwan. If you sell Taiwan advanced weaponry and send three carrier task forces to the Taiwan Strait, you’re tough — but don’t break the 1972 agreement that

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## Board Member’s Opinion Editorial

*This opinion piece featuring PCI Board Member, Chung-in Moon published in the Diplomat on July 28, 2021.*

### Moon Jae-in’s Stalled Odyssey to Peace in Korea

President Moon’s Korea Peace Initiative has faced mixed results and daunting challenges, but there are no better options.



By Chung-in Moon

Following his inauguration in May 2017, President Moon Jae-in embarked on his ambitious Korea Peace Initiative (KPI), which aims to achieve a nuclear weapons-free, peaceful, and prosperous Korean Peninsula. It was guided by three principles. The first is the primacy of peace and a resolute opposition to war, be it preemptive or preventive.

For Moon, even unification is inconceivable without first securing peace. A commitment to “no nukes” is his second principle.

Given his belief that South Korea cannot peacefully co-exist with a nuclear North Korea, he has emphasized the parallel pursuit of denuclearization and a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula. The third principle is “no regime change” in the North, which, Moon believes, is neither feasible nor desirable.

In following through on these principles, Moon has employed four strategies: peace-keeping, peace-making, peace-building, and proactive diplomacy. The peace-keeping strategy refers to efforts to prevent the outbreak of war through military deterrence and alliance with the U.S. Having experienced heightened military tensions in 2017, peace-keeping has become the core component of his initiative. Moon has also pursued a peace-making strategy that has two components: a reduction in inter-Korean military tensions and confidence-building in the short term and the transformation, in the long term, of the armistice agreement into a lasting peace regime through the adoption of an end-of-war declaration and a peace accord among the concerned parties. The strategy of peace-building is to foster peace through economic exchange and cooperation with the North, which he characterizes as a “peace economy” (pyonghwa gyeongje). Priority has been given to the formation of a Korean Peninsula economic community through railway reconnections, energy networks, and overall economic cooperation, including the resumption of the Kaesong Industrial Complex and the Mount Kumgang tourist zone. Finally, Moon has pushed for proactive diplomacy by facilitating inter-Korean and North Korea-U.S. dialogue, as well as seeking close consultation and cooperation with

China, Japan, and Russia.

The KPI has produced mixed results. It was instrumental in turning the year of acute crisis in 2017, which was triggered by the North’s sixth nuclear test and a series of ballistic missile tests, into a year of hope for peace in 2018, as evidenced by the two inter-Korean summits and the historic first North Korea-U.S. summit in Singapore. The North suspended its nuclear and ICBM tests and has complied with the military agreement on tension reduction and confidence-building. Moon and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, who met at Panmunjom on April 27, 2018, declared to the world that “there will be no longer war on the Korean Peninsula, and a new age of peace has opened.” Indeed, peace seemed near, and high expectations prevailed on a coming end to protracted war in Korea, underscoring what appeared to be the triumph of the KPI.

However, the upbeat mood did not last long. Since the Hanoi summit on February 28, 2019, at which President Donald Trump and Chairman Kim Jong Un failed to reach a compromise, the overall situation on the Korean Peninsula has turned sour. Pyongyang retreated into seclusion. In her statement on June 4, 2020, Kim Yo Jong, sister of the North Korean leader, who played a key role in reviving inter-Korean relations, announced the ending of inter-Korean relations and warned of a series of hostile actions. Pyongyang subsequently terminated all channels of communication with Seoul and even demolished the joint liaison office building in Kaesong on June 16, 2020, which served as a symbol of inter-Korean cooperation. North Korea-U.S. relations have also stalled. Pyongyang has persistently rejected subsequent calls by Washington for dialogue. The current outlook for the Korean Peninsula is now marked by suspended communication, a failure to engage in denuclearization talks, and a precarious peace, dealing what appears to be a critical blow to the KPI.

What went wrong? Moon’s peace-making strategy, framed around an end-of-war declaration and progress toward a peace regime, fell prey to stalled denuclearization negotiations. Washington’s maximum pressure campaign and sanctions against the North also blocked Seoul’s attempts to implement inter-Korean agreements on exchange and cooperation, nullifying his peace-building efforts. Pyongyang began to suspect Seoul’s intention, will, and autonomy in carrying out inter-Korean agreements, and subsequently, its disappointment and anger deepened.

Contradictions within the KPI also became problematic. North

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## Board Member’s Opinion Editorial

### Moon Jae-in’s Stalled Odyssey to Peace in Korea

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Korea’s assertive military moves in 2017 drove the Moon government to respond in kind by strengthening missile-defense capabilities and its alliance with the United States. Seoul has not only acquired F-35 stealth fighters, Global Hawks, a high-altitude unmanned surveillance vehicle, and other advanced weapons, but also continued South Korea-U.S. joint military training and exercises. Such moves directly contradict the mandates of peace-making and peace-building, inviting criticism from Pyongyang.

Washington’s stance has also been a source of the current stalemate. Three rounds of summits with the North notwithstanding, the Trump administration intensified rather than softened its maximum pressure campaign, leading Pyongyang to perceive that its good behavior was being reciprocated with punishments. The current Biden administration has expressed its hopes of reaching a diplomatic breakthrough with the North through a calibrated, pragmatic, and gradual approach. Furthermore, Biden has shown his sincerity by promising to honor the Panmunjom Declaration and the Singapore Statement and to support inter-Korean engagement, dialogue, and cooperation in his summit with the South Korean president on May 21. He even seized on that occasion to make a surprise announcement on the appointment of a special U.S. envoy for North Korea. But the North has not responded to these moves, most likely because of the absence of concrete incentives to engage in exchanges.

Finally, domestic variables might have prevented the North from engaging with the South and the United States. The North is currently facing severe internal challenges such as COVID-19, food shortages, and the economic downturn resulting from protracted sanctions. It simply cannot afford to engage with the outside world. This can be inferred from Pyongyang’s behavior. The North sent some positive signals in favor of dialogue with the South in September 2020 and May 2021, but concerns over the pandemic aborted those moves. This represents the fundamental limit to Seoul’s proactive diplomacy.

These daunting challenges notwithstanding, however, the peace initiative is the right choice because there are no other feasible alternatives. Whereas sanctions and maximum pressure have been of limited effect in compelling a change in North Korea’s behavior, military actions are unthinkable to South Koreans. Negotiated settlement of the North Korean nuclear quagmire, peace-making, and peace-building are the mandates of our time based on common sense and historical

consciousness.

Good news came on July 27, the 68th anniversary of the Armistice Agreement of the Korean War. The North and the South restored all channels of communication and pledged to promote trust and reconciliation. Judging by the pandemic situation and the ROK-U.S. joint military exercise planned in August, there are still uncertainties. But they should take this opportunity for improving inter-Korean relations. North Korea should look beyond its domestic issues and seek compromise while setting aside its unilateral demands. Despite the risk of COVID-19, the North should come out and engage with South Korea and the U.S. more actively. Washington also needs to demonstrate a more flexible and pragmatic attitude with concrete incentives. The North will not be fooled by simple rhetoric. The Moon government is structurally constrained, not only because there are only eight months left in its tenure, but also because of the politics of presidential elections, whose campaigning starts in September. Nevertheless, Moon’s government should seek more creative diplomacy to turn the situation around.

To paraphrase Leo Tolstoy, there might not be peace in the real world but only its mirage on the horizon. Yet, we must cherish it and ultimately turn it into a real peace.

### Biden cannot counter China with a team that lacks expertise

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underlies Taiwan’s democracy and prosperity. However, if you invite the Taiwan representative to the presidential inauguration, send members of Congress as official emissaries, and characterize Taiwan as a “security partner,” you don’t strengthen Taiwan but nearly abandon the 1972 agreement to sever official diplomatic and alliance ties. That risks putting Chinese leader Xi Jinping in a position where keeping his job could require decisive action.

Would America have accepted a Cold War leadership without Soviet expertise? The more you see China as a dangerous adversary, the more important it is to actually understand China. It is insufficient for officials to be well-connected, experienced on Middle East issues, and dislike China.

PCI Board Members, Founders and Fellows often contribute to the media. The opinions expressed are solely those of the individuals involved and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Pacific Century Institute.



## PCI Sponsored Programs

### Syracuse University Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs Alumna Kristen Patel named Gregg Professor of Practice at Maxwell

Kristen (Kris) Patel, a distinguished alumna of the Maxwell School ('90 Econ, PSt) with more than 25 years of experience leading intelligence and analytics programs in the public and private sectors, is the new Donald P. and Margaret Curry Gregg Professor of Practice in Korean and East Asian Affairs. Patel returns to Maxwell directly from HSBC's Compliance Office in Asia-Pacific, based in Hong Kong, where she built and managed the regional financial crime intelligence capability for one of the world's largest banks.

In her new role, Patel will serve as faculty member in the Policy Studies Program and teach undergraduate courses in policy studies and graduate courses in public administration and international affairs. In addition, Patel will be a research associate in Maxwell's Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (PARCC) and contribute to Syracuse University's Intelligence Center Community of Academic Excellence.

“We are thrilled to bring someone with Kris' deep regional and topical expertise to Maxwell,” says David M. Van Slyke, the school's dean. “She will contribute significantly to developing collaborative research and teaching initiatives that will be a great asset to faculty and students across programs. We are excited to welcome her back to Maxwell.”

The Gregg Professorship was established in 2009 by a generous gift from Korean-American businessman Spencer Kim and is named in honor of former U.S. Ambassador to South Korea Donald Gregg (1989 to 1993) and his wife. Gregg was previously a member of the National Security Council staff and became Vice President George H.W. Bush's national security advisor. He worked for the Central Intelligence Agency from 1951 to 1975.

Patel's public sector career also includes more than two decades in increasingly senior management positions in the U.S. federal government: as deputy director of intelligence at the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) in the U.S. Department of Treasury, where she focused on high priority illicit finance challenges including counterterrorism, fraud and money laundering issues; as a bureau chief of the DNI Open Source Center in Seoul and as a division chief; and in management and training roles at the Central Intelligence Agency, including as manager of the largest analytics training program at the CIA's Sherman Kent School. Patel has also served as chair of a National Security Council (NSC) sub-group and provided daily intelligence briefings for senior NSC staff and

White House advisors.

“Patel's courses will introduce majors to fields that will help them explore careers in crime prevention and intelligence both in the private and public sector that they know little about,” says William Coplin, professor, chair and founder of the Policy Studies Program at Maxwell. “Her courses will provide students analytic tools like network analysis that have become increasingly important as technology shape decisions and institutions.”

Patel graduated with honors from Syracuse University, earning a BA in economics and policy studies. She also holds an MA in economics from Duke University and a certificate in international finance from Georgetown University. Her first class will be a January 2021 Intercession course offered at Maxwell-in-Washington at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)—PAI 700 Follow the Money: Key Issues in Illicit Finance. She will be in residence at the Maxwell School in Syracuse starting in fall 2021.

*This story was published in Syracuse University Maxwell School News & Events section ([www.maxwell.syr.edu](http://www.maxwell.syr.edu))*

**[Report Launch]** A Policy of Public Diplomacy with North Korea: A Principled and Pragmatic Approach to Promote Human Rights and Pursue Denuclearization.

Dr. Jieun Baek, PCI Fellow, hosted an online report launch session on Thursday, August 12, 2021. The report was based on the insights of members that convened throughout the spring of 2021 to produce policy recommendations on North Korea for the Biden Administration. Dr. Baek also moderated the hour long session with speakers: Dr. Sue Mi Terry, Markus Garlauskas, Greg Scarlatoiu, and David Maxwell.

Please visit: <https://www.belfercenter.org/> to view or download the report.

The Pacific Century Institute has partnered with the Sejong Institute to sponsor the launch of the Sejong Defense Forum. This monthly forum is designed to play a role of bridging different stakeholders of the South Korean defense community. The forum will feature two leading experts with opposing views to shape new theoretical debates, generate new knowledge, and share new policy insights with defense policy community.



Please visit: [www.sejong.org](http://www.sejong.org) to learn more about the Sejong Defense Forum.



## Apply to be the next Youth Ambassador!



and skills needed to "bridge" the gaps between people of divergent cultural heritages by fostering greater understanding among Americans of different cultural and racial backgrounds. instill a sense of understanding and respect to "bridge" the gap between cultures.

Application will be posted on the PCI website in September:

The PCI invites prospective Youth Ambassadors to apply for the 2021-2022 Project Bridge program. Project Bridge was created in response to the Los Angeles Riots that erupted on April 29, 1992 (Sa-I-Gu). The goal of Project Bridge is to reach across ethnic and cultural divides and aims to develop insights

[www.pacificcenturyinst.org](http://www.pacificcenturyinst.org)

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