



# Five Reasons We Need Peace in Korea

Women Mobilizing  
to End the War  
**KOREA PEACE NOW**

The Korean War is the longest standing U.S. conflict. While it no longer consists of active fighting, hostilities between the warring parties have remained high, resulting in the extreme militarization of the Korean Peninsula. Here are five reasons we need a Korea peace agreement:

**1. A peace agreement would eliminate — or greatly reduce — the possibility of a long and costly U.S. military conflict.**

- A fragile truce has defined U.S.-D.P.R.K. relations for 70 years, which means that war could break out at any time.
- It's estimated that as many as 300,000 people would die *in the first few days* of conventional fighting on the Korean Peninsula. Former Secretary of Defense James Mattis warned that a conflict with North Korea “would be probably the worst kind of fighting in most people’s lifetimes.”
- Because of provisions in the U.S.-R.O.K. Mutual Defense Treaty of 1953 and the Sino-North Korean Mutual Aid and Cooperation Friendship Treaty of 1961, a war with North Korea could legally force the United States and China into direct armed conflict with each other, leading to a much larger regional war.

**2. A peace agreement would be a crucial step toward denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.**

- North Korea has stated that the primary impetus for its drive to achieve nuclear capability has been the immense nuclear threat posed to it by the United States, and has made it clear that it will not give up its nuclear weapons until the U.S. drops its “hostile policies” against Pyongyang.
- Peace is the necessary condition for denuclearization. To convince someone to put down a gun, you first have to convince them that they will not be harmed.
- The only way to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula is to end the Korean War, negotiate a peace agreement, and work toward normalizing relations.

**3. A peace agreement would help improve humanitarian conditions for millions of North Koreans.**

- The U.S. strategy of “maximum pressure” on North Korea resulted in several rounds of UN Security Council economic sanctions, unilateral U.S. sanctions, and an aggressive strategy by the U.S. State Department to force other countries to cut off diplomatic ties with North Korea.
- Current sanctions have essentially cut off the humanitarian lifeline provided by UN agencies and aid groups for the most vulnerable populations in North Korea: More than 60,000 North Korean children are at risk of severe acute malnourishment — effectively a precursor to starvation — due to the disruption in the availability of humanitarian supplies caused by tightening sanctions.
- According to David Beasley, the head of the UN’s World Food Program, a peace agreement with North Korea would greatly improve the country’s food security woes.

**4. There is strong popular support for a peace agreement on the Korean Peninsula.**

- Polls show that 9 in 10 South Koreans want an end to the war.

**5. A peace agreement would be a major step toward ending the U.S. policy of perpetual war and shift national resources from the military to more basic human needs.**

- A peace agreement between the U.S. and North Korea would provide an opportunity to revise U.S. foreign policy and its \$700 billion military budget, which could go toward domestic investments that would improve genuine human and ecological security.
- A peace agreement would also help facilitate disarmament and demilitarization on the Korean peninsula. Rather than demanding North Korea’s unilateral denuclearization as a precondition for a peace agreement, the agreement and peace process should provide the context for denuclearization, an end to the U.S.-South Korean nuclear relationship and military exercises, and demining efforts.