

# BRIEF:

## Women and the Korea Peace Process

For the Korea peace process to be successful, women must be meaningfully involved.

**1. Women have a particular stake in resolving the Korean War due to the gendered impacts of war and militarism.**

- a. During the war, women were responsible for finding food and shelter.
- b. From 1931 until the end of World War II, the Japanese Imperial Army sexually enslaved Korean women in so-called comfort stations throughout the Asia-Pacific region. During the Korean War the South Korean government set up a similar comfort station system for their soldiers and, separately with the US Army, for the Allied forces. After the war, the South Korean and US governments used women in camptowns to strengthen military alliances and fuel the South Korean economy, yet they were stigmatized and silenced.
- c. South Korea and North Korea have become highly militarized societies, which is correlated with higher gender inequality and greater violence against women.
- d. The unresolved state of war is used as justification by governments on all sides to redirect resources away from healthcare, childcare, and other social welfare investments that disproportionately impact women.
- e. In North Korea, widespread sanctions impact women economically, socially, and physically. Sanctions cause delays in the delivery of life-saving humanitarian aid.

**2. Despite a rich history of organizing through grassroots action on the Korean Peninsula and internationally, only very few women have been invited to formal peacemaking initiatives.**

**3. Several sources of international and national law, including the Women, Peace and Security framework, mandate women's inclusion.**

- a. Research shows that the full, effective, and meaningful participation of women and civil society groups will contribute to a more durable peace.
- b. For the Korea peace process to be successful, women must take leadership at all levels.

This brief was compiled from “Chapter V: Why Women Should Be Involved in the Peace Process” in the report **Path to Peace: The Case for a Peace Agreement to End the Korean War**, published by the transnational feminist campaign Korea Peace Now! Women Mobilizing to End the War in February 2021. Read the full report at [KoreaPeaceNow.org](http://KoreaPeaceNow.org).



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to End the War  
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