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## South Korean President's Participation in APEC and G20 Summits

In November, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol [undertook](#) an eight-day official trip to South America to attend the two summits related to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in Peru, and the Group of 20 (G20) in Brazil. In Peru's capital Lima, President Yoon [held](#) a bilateral summit with the Peruvian President Dina Boluarte, and signed agreements between the two countries on the issues related to the exploration of critical mineral resources, building infrastructure projects and in the sector of defence industries. During the APEC summit in Lima, President Yoon held bilateral [meetings](#) with the US President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, and with the Chinese President Xi Jinping. At the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, President Yoon promised to enhance Seoul's contribution by 45 percent for the [replenishment](#) of the 21<sup>st</sup> International Development Association (IDA). On the sidelines of the G20 summit, President Yoon [met](#) with the British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, and with the South African President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa. President Yoon also held [summit](#) with the leaders of MIKTA, comprising of the "middle power" countries, namely Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia on the sidelines of G20. During his summit with the leaders of APEC and G20, South Korean President Yoon [raised](#) the issue of North Korea's ongoing military collaboration with Russia against Ukraine.

## South Korea's Export of Nuclear Power Plants

South Korea has emerged as one of the major builders and exporters of nuclear power plants. In July 2024, South Korean companies [clinched](#) a deal for building two nuclear power plants in Czech Republic worth around US\$ 17.3 billion. However, later it was reported that the Czech government has put the deal [on hold](#) regarding the building of these two nuclear power plants by a consortium of South Korean companies led by Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power (KHNP) due to the complaints by other bidders for this project. According to the South Korean media in November 2024, the Czech antitrust regulator [refuted](#) the allegations by the American and French companies for giving preference to the Korean companies for these nuclear power plants by the Czech government. In another report, Kazakhstan [proposed](#) to build a consortium with Seoul for US\$ 10 billion with regards to the construction of nuclear power plant in this Central Asian country. Also, the United States and South Korea are [planning](#) to establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in order to promote cooperation and avoid conflicts between their companies for the construction and development of nuclear power plants in foreign countries. South Korea has also been [eyeing](#) on the nuclear energy market and export of nuclear power plant in the Southeast Asian region, particularly the Philippines.

## Hostility between North and South Korea Increasing

In November, North Korea's state media reported about a white paper from the "DPRK Institute of Enemy State Studies", which was highly [critical](#) of the Yoon Suk Yeol administration in South Korea. The Foreign Ministry of North Korea also criticised the growing [threats](#) to the country from South Korea's deepening military alliance with the United States. During the meeting between Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui in Moscow in November 2024, both countries [blamed](#) the US and its alliance partners for the increasing tensions on the Korean Peninsula. On the other hand, in response to the launch of Pyongyang's intercontinental ballistic missile, Hwasong-19 in October 2024, South Korea, US and Japan conducted [joint air drills](#) in November which included the participation of a B-1B bomber. However, the North Korean regime [criticised](#) this combined military exercise. The South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol also called upon to [counter](#) the "illegal" military partnership between North Korea and Russia as it poses a substantial threat to Seoul's security. In retaliation to Pyongyang's recent missile tests, Seoul conducted the [launch](#) of a Hyunmoo-II ballistic missile on November 8, 2024. In another report, North Korea [jammed](#) the Global Positioning System in November which affected the movement of South Korean ships and civilian planes. North Korea also [severed](#) inter-Korean electric power lines.

## US President-elect Donald Trump and the Two Koreas

It was reported that the second time victory of Donald Trump in the presidential elections of the United States in November 2024 shall have deep [impact](#) on the inter-Korean relations and the geopolitics of the Korean Peninsula. President Yoon Suk Yeol of South Korea [congratulated](#) the President-elect Donald Trump and conveyed his desire to further enhance the bilateral relationship between the two countries. In the first telephone call to Trump after his election, President Yoon [discussed](#) about the alliance partnership and economic issues between Seoul and Washington. However, fears were also raised in the South Korean media regarding Trump's policy towards South Korea could be "[turbulent and rocky](#)". It was reported that there could be [reorientation](#) in America's relations with South Korea under Donald Trump. It will also have considerable [influence](#) on the economic system of South Korea. There are concerns that Trump would pursue "[transactional diplomacy](#)" towards Seoul. Interestingly, Trump's election victory triggered feminist [response](#) against him in America, which is apparently inspired by a South Korean women movement. Also, there were speculations that North Korea may [pursue](#) another summit with Trump. On the other hand, Trump may also seek "[direct diplomacy](#)" with the North Korean regime. Notably, there was no [comment](#) from Pyongyang regarding the election of Trump as the next president of the United States.