

Iran-Korea Relations after 2017 Presidential Elections in Both Countries: Problems and Prospects

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2017 Presidential Election in Korea

- * May 9
- * 13 Candidates (2 dropouts)
- * Early voting due to the impeachment of Park Geun-hye, former President
- * Moon Jae-in elected as 19th President with 41.1 % of the vote (77.2%)
 - * 2nd Hong Jun-pyo 24.0%
- * Term: May 10, 2017 ~ May 9, 2022



2017 Presidential Election in Iran

- * May 19
- * 6 Candidates (2 dropouts)
- * Rouhani re-elected as 12th President with 57.1 % of the vote (73.3%)
 - * 2nd Raisi 38.3%
- * Term: August 5, 2017 ~ August 3, 2021



Challenges for the Two Presidents

Moon

- * A Nation of the People, a Republic of Korea of Justice:
 - * 5 Goals, 20 Strategies, 100 Tasks
 - 1. A Government of the People
 - 2. An Economy Pursuing Co-Prosperity
 - 3. A Nation Taking Responsibility for Individual Lives
 - 4. Well-balanced Development Across Every Region
 - 5. The Korean Peninsula of Peace and Prosperity
- * North Korea Dilemma

Rouhani

- * In his campaign, he stressed he would do his best to address the following issues:
 - * Unemployment
 - * Lifting the Remaining Sanctions
 - * Gender Discrimination
 - * Socio-Political Freedom
- * Conflict with the Trump Admin.
- * Normalization of Diplomatic Relations with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States

Political Geography

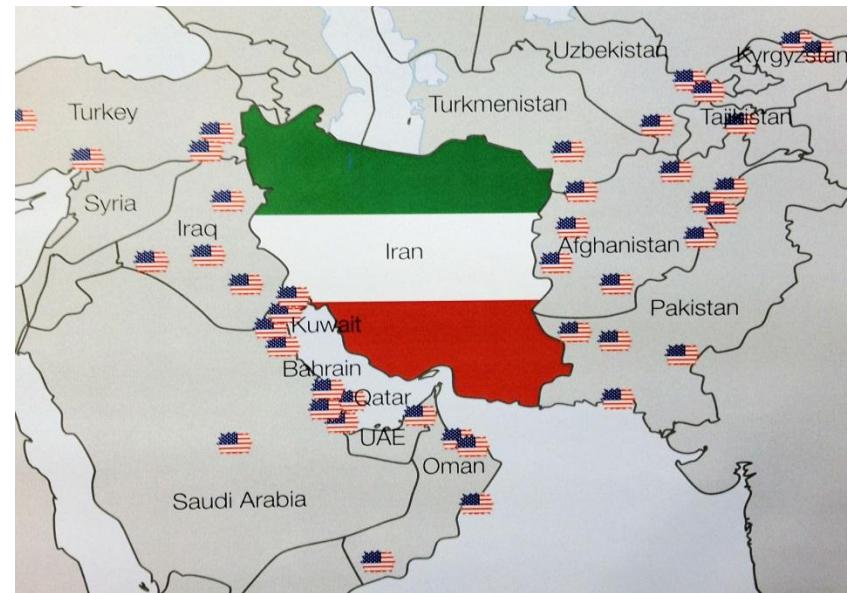
Korean Peninsula

Credit: CNN



US Military Bases around Iran

Credit: Iblagh News



Iran-Korea & The Trump Administration



Iran-Korea & The Trump Administration

Korea-US

- * North Korea's Nuclear Program and ICBM
 - * Maximum Pressure and Engagement
- * China Issue
 - * China's Pressure on Korea against THAAD
 - * US-China: Conflict between the World's Two Largest Economies.

Iran-US

- * JCPOA
- * US Concern over Iran Missile Program
- * US New Iran Sanctions
 - * Apple Apps
- * Hegemony in the Middle East: Wars in the Region
 - * Syria and Yemen
 - * Pro-US Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States against Iran

Prospects for Korea-Iran Relations

- * Both governments are relatively moderate and progressive. But given the political situations, they
 - * Face regional security problems,
 - * Must deal with political oppositions against security and foreign policies.
- * Notwithstanding their different approaches to the US, both countries have sought for mutual economic cooperation and will continue to do so.
- * Active economic cooperation
 - * €8-billion credit line (RM40.39 billion)
 - * Korean firms and Entekhab Investment Development Group
 - * Snapback is still the biggest concern
- * Bilateral relations have so far increasingly been focused on economic issues. As tension is rising in the Korean peninsula, Korea hopes Iran will play an important role in deterring North Korea from progressing its nuclear program.
 - * Korea is concerned about a recent development of relations between Iran and North Korea
 - * In the coming years, North Korea issue may affect the mutual relations, at least in public opinion in Korea.

Suggestions

- * Need to address the concerns about Snapback
 - * Many firms still cite risks associated with the snapback clause.
- * Balance economy-first relations with cultural cooperation:
“In human life, economics goes together with culture.”
 - * More exposure to arts and entertainment
 - * Expanding student exchange program.
 - * Initiate sports events: Regular friendly matches between the two national teams like soccer, volleyball, basketball & etc.
- * For long-lasting friendship, both may have to consider cooperating seriously for global issues on peace and security.
 - * More concerted efforts are strongly required to deal with North Korea’s nuclear program and ICBM.

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