

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The Korean Peninsula has been in the news for decades, although the focus of media coverage often painted the region as a potential flashpoint for war due to North Korea's nuclear weapons program and the threat of military conflict between the North and South. While this arguably remains the dominant perspective in discussions of inter-Korean relations, there has been a growing focus on the possibility of peace and reunification on the peninsula. Moreover, while the volatile relationship of the two Koreas remains one of the most pressing issues in international relations, their foreign policies as individual states merit the same amount of attention and discussion, especially considering the engagement of major powers such as China, Japan, and the United States.

This issue of the PEAR Journal aims to shed a different light on inter-Korean relations and some of the foreign policy issues they face individually. Deviating from the "mainstream" perspectives utilized in academic discussions, this issue aims to offer some insights into the prospect for reunification of the two Koreas taking into account the North Korean "Pyonghattan" elite, as well as the prospect for bilateral cooperation between North Korea and the US through repatriation efforts. Furthermore, common topics such as South Korean soft power and South Korea's diplomatic relationship with Japan are examined under a different lens, focusing on the role of emotions and "passive cyber influence." This issue also features a paper on striking a balance between fighting inflation and pursuing climate actions—a pressing concern not only on the peninsula but on a global scale. Lastly, the interview section features Dr. Young Kyung, a researcher, professor, and expert in business and finance. Dr. Ko shares some insights from her latest book, which documents major corporations in the ASEAN and Indian region, and her thoughts on South Korea's economic relationships and business prospects.

I hope our readers find these articles to be informative and thought-provoking, allowing them to have a fresh perspective on the current situation in and between the two Koreas, which is a result of a complex interplay of historical, cultural, political, and economic factors within and beyond the peninsula.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to our staff editors, Vanessa Le, Lo Wing Tung Bonnie, and Liam Quinn, who have recently completed their master's studies. Thank you for your dedication and

commitment to the success of this edition. It was a pleasure working with you these past three semesters and I hope you find success in all your future endeavors. To our junior staff editors, Tyler Nguyen and Deepanshi Sharma, thank you for your tireless work and support. You both are indeed valuable additions to the team, and I am excited to see what you accomplish in the future.

To our contributors, thank you for trusting us with your work. I am confident that this collaboration will be a positive step forward in your journey in the academe or any field you choose.

Aldrin Joseph Aldea

Editor-in-Chief