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زبانهای اروپایی

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## ***Suspending U.S.-ROK military exercises, decreasing military tensions on Korean Peninsula***

*This statement was written by a collaboration of U.S. and South Korean peace groups, joining many colleagues in the U.S., South Korea and around the world to amplify our very urgent call. It will be sent to President Biden and President Moon in early April 2022.*



We, the civil society groups in the United States, South Korea and around the world, listed herein, urge the governments of the ROK (Republic of Korea, aka South Korea) and the

United States to suspend the combined military exercises and to instead actively pursue a path to peace. We are deeply concerned about the recent increase in military tensions on the Korean Peninsula. The ROK, the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea, aka North Korea) and the United States should take steps toward sincere dialogue and cooperation, not military actions.

Without a peaceful resolution to the Korean War, we have witnessed increasing militarization on the Korean Peninsula for seven decades. The U.S.-ROK combined military exercises, which prepare for an all-out war with North Korea, have developed into large-scale exercises that mobilize considerable weapons, equipment and U.S. troops on the Korean Peninsula. In recent years, these war drills have been based on operation plans that reportedly include preemptive strikes and "decapitation measures" against the North Korean leadership. They also have involved the use of B-2 and B-52H bombers (which are designed to drop nuclear bombs) and nuclear-powered aircraft carriers and submarines. While the United States and South Korea have called them defensive in nature, these military exercises have long been a trigger point for heightened military and political tensions on the Korean Peninsula, due to their scale and provocative nature.

Efforts toward reconciliation and cooperation at the governmental and civilian levels between the two Koreas, and the U.S. and North Korea, have failed to build trust due to the vicious cycle of military provocations. For three years after the inter-Korean summits and the U.S.-DPRK summit in 2018, the United States and South Korea managed to suspend or downsize their military exercises, and North Korea self-imposed a moratorium on its nuclear and long-range missile tests. Without further efforts to implement the agreements between the leaders, including establishing new relations, however, resumed military confrontations could have disastrous consequences.

We want peace talks not war drills and military confrontation. In particular, we urge the Biden administration to resolve the root cause of the conflict between the United States and North Korea — the unresolved Korean War. Continuing to rely on isolation, pressure and threats to force North Korea's unilateral denuclearization is a recipe for failure. Now more than ever, the U.S. has a responsibility to pursue peace and show that responsible nations resolve differences through diplomacy, not by increasing tensions and relying on military escalation. We urge the Moon administration to uphold the commitments made in the Panmunjom Agreement, in which the leaders of the two Koreas agreed to defuse

military tensions and eliminate the risk of war on the Korean Peninsula and suspend the upcoming U.S.-ROK joint war drills.

Suspending these costly and highly provocative military exercises will be a crucial step toward restarting genuine diplomacy with North Korea. It will allow all parties to address other intractable global issues facing our nations today, such as the climate crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, nuclear weapons and war. Now is the time to change direction from military confrontation and pressure toward cooperation, reconciliation and peace.

*Signers: Korea Peace Now Grassroots Network, Women Cross DMZ, Korea Peace Network, Korea Peace Campaign of Veterans for Peace, Peace Treaty Now, Civil Peace Forum, Korea Peace Appeal Campaign, Korean Women's Movement for Peace, Overseas Korean Committee for Implementation of June 15 Joint Declaration and South Korean Committee for Implementation of June 15 Joint Declaration.* Link to the petition: [tinyurl.com/2m5fh49c](https://tinyurl.com/2m5fh49c)

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