# Contents

Introduction .............................................................. 1  
2019 Highlights ........................................................ 2  

**Events and Analysis**  
  Geoecomics and Global Development ........... 4  
  North Korea, China, and Great Powers ........ 8  
  Security and Democracy ................................. 12  
  Additional Events and Analysis ..................... 16  

**Outreach and Social Media** .............................. 18  
**Staff**................................................................. 20  
**Scholars and Fellows**................................. 21  
**Global Fellows** ............................................. 22  
**Asia Council** ................................................ 24  

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Introduction

The Asian century has officially begun. In 2020, Asian economies will be larger than the rest of the world combined. By 2030, the region is expected to contribute roughly 60 percent of global growth and will be responsible for 90 percent of the 2.4 billion new members of the middle class entering the global economy. Yet despite its dynamism and vibrant energy, Asia remains riven by historical and territorial disputes, deepening national animosities, and intensifying geopolitical competition.

For four decades, the Wilson Center’s Asia Program has been a critical voice in Washington, bringing insightful research to debates about Asia’s geopolitics and their meaning for the United States. Dedicated to improving American understanding of the region’s dynamics, the Asia Program provides crucial analysis in Washington on political, economic, and security issues in Asia and on U.S. policies and strategies towards the region.

Our work focuses on three core areas: geoeconomics and global development, security and defense, and great power competition. In each of these areas we have produced cutting-edge research and hosted high-level events while at the same time engaging with key government officials, as well as prominent media outlets such as CNN, the BBC, the New York Times, Foreign Affairs, the Washington Post, and outlets across Asia.

Our team is composed of leading researchers with deep experience on today’s critical issues. I am honored to work with such an extraordinary group of scholars, policy analysts, and staff. Asia is the most dynamic and geopolitically significant regional in the world, and our program is a key source for insights on the region’s critical issues.

Abraham M. Denmark
Director, Asia Program
January 2019

* In terms of purchasing power parity (PPP).
2019 Highlights

Vice President Mike Pence speaks at the Wilson Center October 24, 2019

Senators Cory Gardner (R-Colorado) and Edward J. Markey (D-Massachusetts) discuss Indo-Pacific strategy February 14, 2019

Asia Program staff meet with President Tsai Ing-Wen of Taiwan September 30, 2019

Afghan Ambassador Roya Rahmani speaks at a private roundtable March 4, 2019
Ambassador Alice Wells with President Jane Harman at the Wilson Center. Wells’ speech discussing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor drew responses from around the world.

November 21, 2019

South Korea’s Minister of Interior and Safety, Kim Boo-kyum, speaks at the Wilson Center

March 07, 2019

Wilson Center experts travel to Jeju and Seoul, South Korea, as part of the Indo-Pacific Speaker Series

February 27, 2019

Moon Chung-in, special adviser to the president of the ROK, speaks at a private roundtable discussion

February 27, 2019

The Asia Program launches the Wilson China Fellowship in October 2019. The inaugural class of fellows will begin in 2020.

October 24, 2019

Asia Program staff meet with President Tsai Ing-Wen of Taiwan

September 30, 2019
Geoeconomics and Global Development

Events

China’s Belt and Road Initiative: Strategic and Economic Consequences
January 7, 2019 | Video Available | In Partnership with The Royal Society for Asian Affairs and the Lau China Institute of King’s College London

Roundtable on Indian Investment
March 11, 2019 | Video Available | In Partnership with NASSCOM

The Evolution of U.S. Trade Strategy: Causes and Consequences for Asia
April 23, 2019 | Video Available | In Partnership with the Foreign Policy Research Institute

Ambitions Beyond Growth: Sustainable Development Goals in Asia and the UN
April 25, 2019 | Speaker: Sweta C. Saxena, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

G20 Beyond U.S.-China Tensions: What the G18 Want and Need

America’s Highly Skilled Workforce, the Talent Pipeline, and H-1B Visas
July 24, 2019 | Video Available | In Partnership with NASSCOM

Chilling U.S.-China Economic Relations: Options for Taiwan
August 27, 2019 | Audio Available | Speaker: Chien-Huei Wu, Taiwan Scholar

Japan’s Global Economic Leadership Beyond the G20
October 18, 2019 | Video Available | Summary Publication Available

A Conversation with Ambassador Alice Wells on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
November 21, 2019 | Video Available | Speaker: Ambassador Alice Wells, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia
Publication

The U.S.-China Trade War and Options for Taiwan
October 31, 2019 | Chien-Huei Wu, Taiwan Scholar

Dispatches

Fighting Two Fronts in the Trade War, With Only One Popular Path
January 15, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

Unpacking the Belt and Road Initiative: What Is It and Where Is It Going?
February 5, 2019 | Michael Kugelman

The Dangerous Business of Defining Trade Threats
March 12, 2019 | Shihoko Goto
Eyeing the EU’s Overtures to China
April 16, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

Southeast Asia Stands to Gain Big on U.S.-China Frictions
May 7, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

Paying the Cost for U.S. Withdrawal from TPP
June 4, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

The Aftermath of a Lackluster G20
July 2, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

Behind Asia’s Other Trade War
July 16, 2019 | Abraham Denmark

Beware Depending on Central Banks to Offset Trade Tension Costs
August 1, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

The Ambiguous U.S.-Japan Trade Deal, Lost in Translation
August 27, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

Taiwan’s Economic Momentum for Regeneration
September 24, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

Calling for a Multilateral Approach to Tackle Political Risk
October 22, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

Trade Restrictions May Lead to Increased Competitiveness
November 19, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

The Speech Heard Round the World
December 10, 2019 | Michael Kugelman

Realizing the Singapore-on-Thames Inspiration
December 17, 2019 | Shihoko Goto
Wilson Center NOW

Taking the Temperature of the Global Economy
September 18, 2019 | With Meg Lundsager and Kent Hughes, Public Policy Fellows

New Leadership and Challenges for the IMF
November 1, 2019 | With Shihoko Goto and Meg Lundsager
North Korea, China, and Great Powers

Events

Geopolitical Implications of a New Era on the Korean Peninsula
January 13, 2019 | Video Available

Book Launch: ‘On the Brink: Trump, Kim, and the Threat of Nuclear War’
February 5, 2019 | Audio Available | Speaker: Van Jackson, Author and Global Fellow

The Future of the Indo-Pacific: Views from the Senate
February 14, 2019 | Video Available | Speakers: Cory Gardner, Senator (R-Colorado) and Edward J. Markey, Senator (D-Massachusetts)
The Taiwan Relations Act at Forty and U.S.-Taiwan Relations
April 9, 2019 | Video Available | In Partnership with CSIS and Brookings

What Do U.S.-China Tensions Mean for India?
September 5, 2019 | Video Available | Speakers: Jagannath Panda, Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, New Delhi and Jeff M. Smith, The Heritage Foundation

ROK-U.S. Cooperation in an Era of U.S.-China Strategic Competition
November 18, 2019 | Audio Available

Publications

Geopolitical Implications of a New Era on the Korean Peninsula
May 2, 2019 | Abraham Denmark, Nobumasa Akiyama, Patrick M. Cronin, and Yoshihide Soeya

Managing the Rise of China’s Security Partnerships in Southeast Asia
July 22, 2019 | Prashanth Paramweswaran

Dispatches

We Need a Roadmap: Second Trump-Kim Summit Needs to be More Than Just Another Photo Op
January 22, 2019 | Jean H. Lee

February 21, 2019 | Jean H. Lee

The Implications of Declaring an End to the Korean War
February 26, 2019 | Abraham Denmark

“A Stab in the Back” or “A Pat on the Back?”
March 19, 2019 | Jungkun Seo

Is There a Pot of Gold at the End of the Rainbow?
March 26, 2019 | Jungkun Seo
Where Does It Stand and Where Should It Shift? A South Korean Perspective on North Korea Nuclear Diplomacy
April 9, 2019 | Jungkun Seo

Shifting Gears: Post-Hanoi, North Korea’s Kim Jong Un Turns Diplomatic Attention to Moscow
April 23, 2019 | Jean H. Lee

The Normalization Of Kim Jong-Un - What Kim Gains From Visit To Russia
April 25, 2019 | Katie Stallard-Blanchette

The South China Sea in Strategic Terms
May 14, 2019 | Marvin Ott

Perspectives from Pyongyang: Highlights from the Jeju Forum
June 11, 2019 | Jean H. Lee

Nuclear Weapons and Their Pride of Place in North Korea
August 6, 2019 | Jean H. Lee

What Does the Rise of China’s Security Partnerships Mean for Asia?
August 13, 2019 | Prashanth Parameswaran

Taiwan in a Strategic Whirlwind
October 8, 2019 | Abraham Denmark

Parsing The Propogand: What To Make Of Kim Jong Un On A White Horse
October 29, 019 | Jean H. Lee

U.S.-China Military Competition Intensifying Over INF Missiles
November 13, 2019 | Abraham Denmark

Two Years On, A Sobering Look At The Human Toll Of The Maximum Pressure Campaign Against North Korea
November 26, 2019 | Henri Feron

Why 2020 Will Be a Big Year for Vietnam’s Foreign Policy
December 3, 2019 | Prashanth Parameswaran
Wilson Center NOW

Countdown to Second US-North Korea Summit
January 23, 2019 | With Jean H. Lee

Did the US and North Korea Come Close to Nuclear War?
February 12, 2019 | With Van Jackson

How Post Wars Shape the Present in China, Russia, and North Korea
June 18, 2019 | With Katie Stallard-Blanchette

Need to Know Podcast

Need to Know: Negotiations and Love Notes - Where Do The North Korea Nuclear Talks Stand?
September 5, 2019 | With Jean H. Lee

South Pacific Breezes Blowing - Why Pacific Island Nations Are Looking to DC
November 5, 2019 | With Abraham Denmark
Security and Democracy

Events

Ground Truth Briefing: The India-Pakistan Crisis: What Next?
March 5, 2019 | Audio Available

What’s Next for the Rohingya?
April 2, 2019 | Video Available | Speakers: Nehginpao Kipgen, Jindal School of International Affairs and Michael C. Davis, Global Fellow

New Survey Release: What Do Afghans Think About Current Peace and Reconciliation Efforts?
May 2, 2019 | Video Available

U.S.-Japan Relations in Disarray: Who Will Sustain Liberal International Order, and How?
May 7, 2019 | Video Available | In Partnership with Southern Methodist University

Ground Truth Briefing | What to Make of India’s Election Results?
May 28, 2019 | Audio Available

India’s Election Results: Impacts on the Economy and Economic Relations with Washington
June 10, 2019 | Video Available

Taiwan’s Democracy and the Free and Open Pacific: A Mayoral Perspective
July 10, 2019 | Video Available | Speaker: Cheng Wen-tsan, Mayor of Taoyuan City, Taiwan

Book Launch - Sharia and the State in Pakistan: Blasphemy Politics
July 15, 2019 | Audio Available | Speaker: Farhat Haq, Author

Book Event—Voting in a Hybrid Regime: Bangladesh’s 2018 Election and Implications for Politics in Bangladesh and Beyond
September 23, 2019 | Audio Available | Speaker: Ali Riaz, Illinois State University; Former Public Policy Scholar, Wilson Center
Myths and Realities of Japan’s Security Policy
September 26, 2019 | Video Available | Speaker: Narushige Michishita, Global Fellow

Democracy and Human Rights in South Asia: The Inaugural Asma Jahangir Memorial Lecture
October 3, 2019 | Video Available | Speaker: Ayesha Jalal, Tufts University

Elections, Peace Talks, and U.S. Policy: What’s Next for Afghanistan?
October 10, 2019 | Video Available

Democracies, Dictatorships, and Grand Strategy
November 6, 2019 | Video Available | Speakers: Daniel Drezner, The Fletcher School, Tufts University and Jude Blanchette, Center for Strategic and International Studies

How Free Is the Fourth Estate? A Discussion about India’s Media Environment
November 18, 2019 | Video Available

Eighteen Years and $132 Billion: Taking Stock of U.S. Reconstruction Efforts in Afghanistan
November 20, 2019 | Speaker: John F. Sopko, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR)

Before the Indo Pacific: The Legacy of Indian Ocean Geopolitics During the Cold War
December 10, 2019 | Audio Available | Speaker: Berenice Guyot-Rechard, Fellow and Senior Lecturer in 20th Century International History, King’s College London

Publications

Managing the Rise of Southeast Asian Coast Guards
February 14, 2019 | Prashanth Parameswaran

Pakistan Policy Symposium Policy Brief Series #1-7
February 21, 2019 | Edited By Michael Kugelman, Athar Javaid, and David Silverman

The Triumph and the Primacy of the Indian Right: Reasons and Ramifications
September 19, 2019 | Kalyani Shanker
Dispatches

Are Sulu Sea Trilateral Patrols Actually Working?
January 29, 2019 | Prashanth Parameswaran

Remembering the Rohingya
April 2, 2019 | Michael Kugelman

Values and U.S. Policy Toward the Indo-Pacific
May 21, 2019 | Abraham Denmark

An Obscure Organization with Outsize Importance
June 25, 2019 | Michael Kugelman

Post-Protests, The Dilemma Remains Unsolved in Hong Kong
July 9, 2019 | Alison Chen

The Lingering, and Complicating, Threat of ISIS in Afghanistan
August 20, 2019 | Michael Kugelman

America Has a New Strategy in Afghanistan, But It Isn’t Actually Very New
September 17, 2019 | Michael Kugelman

Afghanistan’s Silent Tragedy
October 15, 2019 | Michael Kugelman

Wilson Center NOW

India-Pakistan and the Threat of War
March 25, 2019 | With Michael Kugelman
Need to Know Podcast

Taking a Look at India
June 24, 2019 | With Michael Kugelman

Taliban Talks Collapse...Now What?
September 10, 2019 | With Michael Kugelman
Additional Events and Analysis

Events

Securing the Games: Tokyo’s 2020 Cybersecurity Challenge
March 19, 2019 | Audio Available | Speakers: Motohiro Tsuchiya, Keio University and Keio Global Research Institute (KGRI) and Meg King, the Science and Technology Innovation Program, Wilson Center

The Seventh Annual Nancy Bernkopf Tucker Memorial Lecture on U.S.-East Asia Relations
April 11, 2019 | Video Available | Speaker: Jerome Cohen, New York University Law School

Preparing for the Unpredictable: The ADB and Natural Disasters, Trade Disputes
April 16, 2019 | Video Available | Speaker: Yasuyuki Sawada, Chief Economist, Asian Development Bank

Why Can’t Pakistani Children Read? The Inside Story of Education Reform Efforts Gone Wrong
July 12, 2019 | Video Available | Speaker: Nadia Naviwala, Author and Global Fellow

Publication

Why Can’t Pakistani Children Read? The Inside Story of Education Reform Efforts Gone Wrong
July 11, 2019 | Nadia Naviwala
Dispatches

Unlocking Japan’s Immigration Policy Potential
February 12, 2019 | Shihoko Goto

June 27, 2019 | Hyungtae Kim

In Asia, Don’t Count the American People Out
September 12, 2019 | Abraham Denmark

Secret Mission: Understanding South Korea-Japan Tensions Through a Popular South Korean Film
October 1, 2019 | Jihoon Lim
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**Impact.** The Wilson Center’s deep ties with Washington help the Asia Program connect with policymakers across the political spectrum.

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Kurt M. Campbell, Chairman and CEO, The Asia Group; Former Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific

Aaron Friedberg, Professor, Princeton University; Former Advisor to the Vice President

Ichiro Fujisaki, President, America-Japan Society; Former Ambassador of Japan to the United States

Robert Kaplan, Author of Monsoon and Asia’s Cauldron

Ahn Ho-Young, Former Ambassador of the ROK to the United States

John Negroponte, Vice Chairman, McLarty Associates; Former Deputy Secretary of State