

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 6, 2019

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

We write to express our support for the conclusion of a robust multi-year Special Measures Agreement (SMA) – a cost-sharing agreement that supports the United States military presence in South Korea. A strong U.S.-South Korean alliance, which has traditionally been underscored by multi-year Special Measures Agreements, is critical to U.S. alliance posture in the Asia-Pacific region and to carrying out U.S. defense commitments to our allies in Northeast Asia. Communicating unwavering U.S. commitment to our allies is particularly pertinent as the Administration prepares for a second U.S.-North Korea summit in February. Anything less exposes an unnecessary opportunity for North Korea to take advantage of any real or perceived divisions within the alliance.

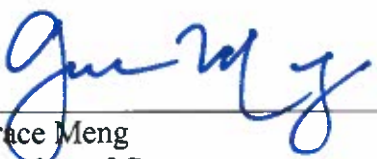
This year marks the 66th anniversary of the U.S.-South Korea alliance, which has been the foundation for peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and throughout the region. Forged in the fire of the Korean War, U.S.-South Korea military cooperation has transformed into a comprehensive alliance that encompasses robust trade, people-to-people exchanges, and shared values between our nations. Our force posture on the Peninsula has enhanced the United States' ability to deter North Korean aggression, contributed to a durable peace in the Indo-Pacific, and has resulted in expansive economic growth among Indo-Pacific countries' economies.

It is our understanding the Trump and Moon Administrations have agreed to a preliminary one-year SMA. While we are pleased that this short-term agreement was reached between the two countries in advance of the North Korea summit, we are concerned by the temporary nature of this agreement and urge the Administration to seek a longer-term solution that communicates the depth of U.S. commitment to our South Korean allies.

This Administration's transactional approach to our alliances represents a threat to U.S. national security and undermines our credibility. Sensitive decisions regarding financial support for U.S. troop presence and the length of these important agreements should be negotiated from a position of trust and deep appreciation for the mutual benefit they provide to both countries. A serious and robust Special Measures Agreement with South Korea will strengthen our partnership, enhance the United States' credibility in the Indo-Pacific, and send a strong signal to North Korea and the region that reflects the durability of the U.S.-South Korea alliance.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress