



# Press Release

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## Asan Institute Releases the Issue Brief: "South Korea's Quad Opportunity"

**SEOUL**, November 15, 2023 – Dr. Peter K. LEE and Mr. KANG Chungku of the Asan Institute's Center for Regional Studies (<http://en.asaninst.org/>) have published a new Asan Issue Brief on **"South Korea's Quad Opportunity: Aligning Foreign Policy and Public Opinion."**

The Issue Brief notes that the Yoon Suk Yeol administration has promised to work closely with, and potentially even join, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) between the United States, Australia, India, and Japan. Yet most public opinion surveys to date have found that only half of South Koreans support joining the Quad, while around a third remain undecided. The Issue Brief argues that the public is, in fact, more positively disposed towards the Quad than is commonly acknowledged.

First, it discusses South Korean public awareness of the Quad and changing government positions towards the grouping. For example, it analyzes 1,936 news articles that mention the Quad and finds that 47.5% of news articles incorrectly framed the Quad as an "anti-China" grouping or "security(military) alliance."

Second, it reviews Asan Institute polling that show significantly higher public support for the Quad than in other surveys. The Asan surveys were designed to explore the presence of a "soft-yes" or "soft-no" tendency and found that a majority of the undecided lean in favor of the Quad.

Third, it examines whether negative views of the national security as a proxy for threat from China or positive sentiment towards US leadership and US-led initiatives better fits with the demographic breakdown of Quad support. We find that South Korean support for the Quad runs contrary to a pessimistic strategic outlook and instead, correlates with alliance solidarity.

The Issue Brief concludes by calling for greater bipartisanship and public awareness about the Quad as well as a short-term practical cooperation ahead of the 2024 US president election.

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*The Asan Institute for Policy Studies (<http://en.asaninst.org/>) is an independent think tank that provides innovative policy solutions and spearheads public discourse on the core issues in Korea, East Asia and the world. Our goal is to assist policymakers to make better informed and mutually beneficial policy decisions.*