U.S. Recruits South Korea To Help Colonize And Militarize Space

11-15-2024 ~ The United States is colonizing and militarizing Earth's orbit, recruiting allies such as South Korea's Yoon Suk Yeol administration. More specifically, the U.S. Space Force is creating a "swarm" of satellites that, when combined with AI, seeks to attain a god's eye view across all domains of war. This proliferated warfighter space architecture (PWSA) of small low Earth orbit (LEO) satellites would allow the United States—in its [Department of Defense's words](#)—"to sense, make sense, and act at all levels and phases of war, across all domains, and with partners, to deliver information advantage at the speed of relevance." These actions have started an international arms race to space. In 2020, China [applied](#) to the United Nations International Telecommunication Union to launch its own LEO satellites.

Yet, saddled with $35 trillion in debt, the United States can't do it alone. It needs its arms industries and allies such as South Korea. This has led the Yoon administration to launch its own [NewSpace program](#) to nurture its own aerospace industry. The colonization and militarization of Earth's orbit will generate [trillions of dollars](#) for war profiteers while impoverishing humanity and the planet.

On October 19, 2024, dozens of activists from struggles across South Korea held their first national gathering—the "National Discussion on the Space Industry And Militarization of Space"—opposing the Yoon administration's NewSpace program due to its destructive military, economic, and environmental costs.

South Korea's NewSpace
Held as part of Space4Peace's annual "Keep Space for Peace Week" actions (timed to coincide with the UN's World Space Week), the conference was held in Daejeon, one of the three locations for Yoon's regional space cluster. Sung-hee Choi, of the People Against the Militarization of Space and Rocket Launches, explained that LEO satellites are promoted for their potential to provide universal internet access, such as SpaceX's Starlink, with little mention of their dual military purpose. The U.S. Air Force recognized [in 1996](#) that this dual purpose

would give it the "ultimate high ground" in warfare.

Choi explained how the United States's massive debt means it needs allies such as South Korea to win space colonization. In 2016, the U.S. signed a space cooperation agreement giving South Korea access to U.S. aerospace technology and knowledge. In 2022, the Yoon administration agreed to house a U.S. Space Force foreign command, integrating South Korea's satellites into the United States's military satellite network. In June 2024, South Korea conducted its first multi-domain military exercises with the United States and Japan that included the space domain. Then, in September 2024, South Korea signed a Letter of Intent with the U.S. to share non-classified aerospace technology through the U.S. Space Forces-Space Joint Commercial Operations.

SpaceX is central to the United States's NewSpace approach to addressing its space needs via the private sector. Harnessing its reusable rocket technology, its 399 launches, and Starlink's 6,371 active satellites (60 percent of the world's total), SpaceX's Starshield (Starlink's military version) provides the satellite and launch services for the U.S. Space Development Agency's proliferated warfighter satellite architecture. Following the United States's lead, the Yoon administration is creating its own version of SpaceX: Hanwha Aerospace.

Outwardly, the Yoon administration promotes its investment in aerospace as a source of regional development for underdeveloped areas. Yet, as Hyun-hwa Oh, co-president of Catholic Climate Action, mentioned, few people living in those places are aware of how these new industries are used for waging war and even fewer have a say in whether or not to host them. Worse, many are forced to choose between jobs building weapons or no jobs at all.

The Costs of War 4.0
The fourth industrial revolution is transforming the way we wage war. If satellites will integrate and control all domains (naval, air, land, space, and cyberspace), then at the heart of its command center (the Joint All-Domain Command and Control) will be AI and machine learning in order to "extract intelligence autonomously and build predictive models of what they [satellites] observe." As presenter Hee-eum noted, we are already witnessing the human costs of War 4.0 through Israel's Lavender AI program. As reported in +972 magazine, during the first weeks of the Israeli bombing of Gaza, Lavender identified nearly all those that would be targeted for bombing. Despite knowing about the AI program's 10

percent error rate, most of the targets it selected were rubber-stamped in about "20 seconds."

War 4.0 also accelerates environmental destruction. As Hee-eum highlighted, the roundtrip to launch satellites releases greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to driving a car around the earth 70 times. Worse, it releases soot that absorbs heat and can increase temperatures in the upper atmosphere. Furthermore, the AI that will sift through the satellite data is highly energy-intensive. Even ChatGPT requires 10 times more electricity than a Google search. Furthermore, a Starlink satellite is deorbited after five years and then is burnt up upon reentry, producing aluminum oxides that deplete the ozone layer. The U.S. Air Force prefers even shorter life spans to enable more frequent upgrades. The expansion of these satellites will create more space junk burning up and polluting the atmosphere.

Still Fighting Cold War 1.0
If the conference launched the fight against the Yoon administration's militarization of space, it also remained connected to frontline struggles against militarization in South Korea, the United States's first line of attack against China. In particular, presenters spoke about the construction of airports with dual military functions. Kim Yeon-tae president of the People's Action to Nullify The New Saemangeum Airport, noted the absurdity of spending over 40 trillion won ($30 billion) to build 10 more airports in an area as small as South Korea, where 11 out of 15 airports are running at a loss. Constructing new airports only made sense when taking into account their dual military use. More specifically, Saemangeum International Airport—right across from China and connected to the U.S. Kunsan Air Force Base—would allow the Air Force Base to launch more jets. Soon-ae Kim, chair of the Operating Committee of Jeju's Green Party, explained how building a second airport on the island as well as prospects of its military use violate Jeju's official designation as an island of peace.

Conference speakers and attendees made clear that their movement was rooted in frontline struggles against profiteering from human and environmental destruction and that it would continue. Yong-woon Hwang, a journalist and activist against the Jeju Naval Base, proposed building public awareness around AI and the militarization of space through the annual Whistler Film Festival. Ultimately, the activists gathered to build a better world we can live in and leave behind for our children.

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