

## BAKER BRIEFING

Research from the Howard H. Baker Jr. Center for Public Policy



### Global Security Research and Engagement



#### Taking Stock of U.S. Alliances in the Asia Pacific

The U.S. has spent decades building and strengthening alliances in the Asia-Pacific region. But China and regional tensions continue to affect these partnerships.

In two recent studies, Global Security (GS) Director Krista Wiegand and GS Post-Doctoral Fellow Sojeong Lee sought to better understand the behavior of U.S. allies in the region.

Their paper, *South Korea's Strategy toward the U.S. China Rivalry*, examines the role of territorial and maritime disputes, studying South Korea's strategies toward China in its role as a U.S. ally. They find that South Korea is more vulnerable to Chinese retaliation, making it difficult for South Korea to clearly side with the U.S.

In *Walking a Fine Line: Trilateral Tensions between South Korea, Japan and the U.S.*, Wiegand and Lee argue that in addition to high levels of nationalism in South Korea and Japan, U.S. pressure on these countries to resolve their historic tensions has not succeeded because the U.S. is inconsistent in applying pressure on this matter – only doing so when U.S. security interests are negatively affected.

Wiegand and Lee presented their research, funded by the Korea Foundation, at the [American Political Science Association](#) Annual Conference in Montreal in September 2022.



#### International Organizations' Roles in International Crises

What happens when an international crisis doesn't reach the level necessary for other countries to step in? Can non-country players step in?

Studying emergent piracy problems off the African coast, Baker

Experts [Jon Ring](#) and [Gary Uzonyi](#) examine whether international organizations can resolve international crises and solve significant problems, an enduring question in international relations.

Using data collected by Baker Center Global Security Fellow Brandon Prins as part of his [MINERVA project on piracy](#), Ring and Uzonyi show that international cooperation organized through the Southern African Development Community did help countries push back against piracy. Their results suggest that such organizations can help solve significant international problems.

Read their September 2022 article in *International Studies Review* here: [Rethinking Test of the IO Effectiveness Hypothesis: Evidence from Counter-Piracy Efforts in the Global South](#).



#### September GS Visits

On September 22, the Global Security Program hosted [Yuki Tatsumi](#), director of the Japan program and co-director of the East Asia program at the [Stimson Center](#). The discussions focused on how the two centers could partner in research and student programs.

On September 27, Madeline Adams, CEO of the [Japan American Society of Tennessee](#), sat down with Global Security Director Krista Wiegand to discuss how the Baker Center can work with JAST to promote U.S.-Japanese relations in Tennessee.

### Energy & Environment Research and Engagement



#### Learning the Right Lessons from Disasters

If the power industry fails to learn from the root causes of Texas' February 2021 freeze, their next weather crisis might be right around the corner. And if the U.S. fails to do the same, other parts of the country could experience the same loss of revenue and life that Texas did.

In a newly published paper, Baker Fellow and UT Law Professor [Becky Jacobs](#) takes a different approach to the February 2021 freeze and failure of the Texas electricity system that led to 210 lives lost and an economic loss of \$155 billion for the U.S.

Read the *Tennessee Journal of Business Law* article *Professor Commentary: Failing to Learn from the Texas Power Crisis, (or, The Paradox of an Unreliable Electric Reliability Council and a Public Utility Commission in a Largely Unregulated Market)*, [here](#).



#### Fulbright Fellowship takes Baker Fellow to Nepal's National Parks

Baker Fellow and Professor [Neelam Poudyal](#) is spending his academic year at Pokhara Campus of Tribhuvan University to research sustaining human-wildlife coexistence. Poudyal hopes this research can lead to bio-diversity conservation management that works for national parks around the world.

Working on a Fulbright Fellowship, Poudyal's research project focuses on the effectiveness of protected-area revenue sharing in reducing human-wildlife conflicts. He is analyzing the case of a

public policy that Nepal has adopted around all its protected areas. The policy sends 50 percent of park revenue back to support conservation and rural development projects in the fringe communities to help locals realize the protected areas have benefits (in addition to local cost) and improve park-people relationship.

### Student Spotlight



#### Aom Boon

Aom Boon is a Baker ambassador working as a Global Security research assistant with GS Director Krista Wiegand. Boon is a senior, majoring in political science with a concentration in international affairs.

*"As a research assistant, I am able to explore my passion for international affairs on another level and familiarize myself with topics that I have never encountered before. The Baker Ambassador program has also shaped my college experience in the best ways possible. Being surrounded by peers and mentors who are passionate about similar interests, I have been able to cultivate meaningful relationships through this program."*

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