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## Challenges for Yoon Suk-yeol's Policy on North Korean Human Rights

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The launch of the new Yoon Suk-yeol administration signals a change in South Korea's political stance towards North Korean human rights issues. This article provides a brief overview of past efforts to promote human rights in North Korea, and also describes the progress and limitations of such policies. In addition, views on the principles, strategies of approach, and main challenges of North Korean human rights policies are suggested for the new administration.

The South Korean government's efforts to advocate human rights in North Korea have achieved some meaningful results. First, the North Korean human rights issue has been adopted as a main agenda by both domestic and international communities. Second, a basis for international cooperation has been established in the global society. Third, the domestic infrastructure has been strengthened to promote North Korean human rights.

However, along with such achievements, there also exists some limitations. First, North Korean human rights issues have experienced a frequent ebb and flow of global attention, due to the inextricably linked agendas of North Korean denuclearization and human rights. Second, North Korean human rights policies have shown inconsistencies in the capricious manner they have been carried out according to the changed administration. Third, severed ties between the two Koreas have narrowed the passageway to provide practical support for the promotion of human rights in North Korea.

Reflecting on the achievements and limitations of past efforts to improve the human rights situation in North Korea, the Yoon administration should strive to execute a multifaceted and balanced human rights policy. First, the new administration should adhere to the following principles: the universality of human rights; interdependence of human rights; pressure and dialogue; and practical approach. Strategies of approach to advocate human rights in North Korea should include active cooperation with the global society, inter-Korean cooperation, and division of roles between the public and private sectors. In addition, the Yoon administration must build its capacity of human rights diplomacy, establish a strong infrastructure, and foster national consensus to

successfully carry out its North Korean human rights policy.

Considering the intensified provocations by North Korea and the bloc-ization of the Northeast Asian order, it seems unlikely that the two Koreas will be able to avoid confrontation. Amid such a situation, the Yoon administration must improve its infrastructure for the promotion of human rights in North Korea, and also garner a national consensus of support for its policies. In particular, it is important for the new administration to recognize the younger generation's change in perspective on North Korean issues. Rather than resorting to party politics, the new administration should strive to gain widespread public acknowledgement for the need to improve the human rights situation in North Korea.