

Amb. Joseph Yun

Senior Advisor, The Asia Group

Ambassador Joseph Y. Yun is a Senior Advisor at The Asia Group. Widely recognized as one of the leading experts on U.S. relations with North Korea, as well as Washington's broader approach to the Asia-Pacific, he brings over three decades of insights and expertise to bolster the firm's Korea and Southeast Asia portfolios.

Ambassador Yun previously served as the Special Representative for North Korea Policy from October 2016 to May 2018. He played an instrumental role in reopening the "New York channel," a direct communication line with officials from Pyongyang. During this time, he concurrently held the position of Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Korea and Japan, responsible for all aspects of bilateral relations with the two treaty allies.

As U.S. Ambassador to Malaysia, he emphasized stronger ties between the United States and Malaysia by fostering cooperation on issues of mutual interest, including trade and investment, climate change, energy security, counter-terrorism, and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. During his tenure, Ambassador Yun also coordinated the state visit of then-President Obama in April 2014, which marked the first visit to Malaysia by a U.S. president since 1966. These efforts culminated in the signing of the U.S.-Malaysia Comprehensive Partnership Agreement, which pledged closer cooperation on security, trade, education, technology, energy, environment, and people-to-people ties.

From 2011 to 2013, Ambassador Yun served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs and led efforts to normalize diplomatic relations with Myanmar. In 2010, he became the first senior U.S. diplomat to visit Myanmar since the release of Burmese democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest. He also worked to lay the foundation for official participation by the President of the United States in the annual East Asian Summits.

His previous assignments also included Deputy Assistant Secretary for Southeast Asian Affairs, Counselor for Political Affairs in the U.S. Embassy in Seoul, Economic Counselor in the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, as well as earlier assignments in South Korea, Indonesia, Hong Kong, and France. Ambassador Yun is the recipient of a Presidential Meritorious Service Award, four Superior Honors Awards,

and nine Foreign Service Performance Awards from the U.S. State Department.

In addition to his role at The Asia Group, Ambassador Yun regularly contributes to CNN's coverage of international economic and security developments as a Global Affairs Analyst.

Prior to joining the Foreign Service in 1985, Ambassador Yun was a senior economist for Data Resources Inc., an economic data distributor based in Lexington, Massachusetts. Ambassador Yun holds degrees from the London School of Economics and the University of Wales.

He speaks Korean, Indonesian and French. He is married to Dr. Melanie Billings-Yun. They have one son, Matthew.