

UPF Seoul, Korea: 3rd Think Tank 2022 Forum - Korean Reunification

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Seoul, Korea -- The third *Think Tank 2022* Forum, which brings together leaders around the world to discuss peace on the Korean Peninsula, was held at the Cheongshim Peace World Center in Gapyeong-gun, South Korea on December 4, 2021. The forum featured panelists who are engaged with UPF's International Association for Peace and Economic Development (IAED), and opened with a beautiful performance by the Little Angels Children's Folk Ballet. TV host and former Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) announcer **Mr. Young-il Shin** served as the emcee. About 1,000 participants attended in-person, including many local dignitaries and representatives of associations working for the reunification of the Korean Peninsula and peace leaders and advocates worldwide.

On September 18, the first *Think Tank 2022* Forum welcomed Hon. Mike Pompeo, the 70th secretary of state of the United States, who led a meaningful discussion on diplomacy in relation to a unified Korea, and on October 16, the second *Think Tank 2022* Forum hosted Hon. Mike Pence, the 48th vice president of the United States.



The welcoming address was given by *Think Tank 2022* Forum Organizing Committee Chairman **Dr. Young-ho Yoon**. He pointed out that according to recent UN data, the coronavirus has cost the global economy \$4.5 trillion dollars. Dr. Yoon explained the background leading up to the ideological confrontation on the peninsula and concluded hopefully: "In these times of crisis, we must rise up from

frustration and despair and make new plans for the planet and our future based on new imagination."

The keynote speaker was **Mr. Jim Rogers**, chairman of Rogers Holdings and an American investor and financial commentator based in Singapore who serves as an adviser to UPF and the IAED. Mr. Rogers predicts that when the Korean Peninsula reunifies, Korea will emerge as the most successful nation in the world.

Mr. Rogers spoke about the economic potential of the Korean Peninsula once the 38th parallel opens up and North and South Korea are peacefully reunified. "I'm going to say it a hundred times. This peninsula has the potential to be an extremely, extremely exciting place going forward." He recognized joint economic projects as symbols of inter-Korean reconciliation and cooperation, and gave a few examples, including the Pyeonghwa Motors auto factory, the Japan-Korea Undersea Tunnel project, and tourism ventures to Diamond Mountain in North Korea. While the North has natural resources and "educated, disciplined, cheap labor," the South has huge amounts of capital, manufacturing ability and capability and knowledge, he cited. "Put them together ... what could be more successful and exciting?"



After Mr. Rogers' stimulating presentation, a commentary was given by **Dr. Young Chul Kim**, former minister of unification of South Korea, former president of the Korea Institute for National Unification, and current chairman of the Korean Peninsula Policy Forum.

Dr. Kim spoke about the promising beginning that everyone expected the Kaesong Industrial Park, located about six miles north of the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), would bring when the first factory was completed on December 15, 2004. There was great hope that the park would be a collaborative economic effort that would draw North and South Korea together, but rising tensions between the two countries resulted in the closure of the park in February 2016.

Due to economic sanctions that have been placed on North Korea since 2017, most projects for inter-Korean economic cooperation have not been able to be pursued. "This is very frustrating for establishing a peace economy on the Korean Peninsula," Dr. Kim said.

He added that "we should also prepare bridges of cooperation in various fields such as industrial cooperation and transportation logistics." He spoke about the rail lines connecting North and South Korea, the train that runs between Beijing-Pyongyang and the train that runs between Russia-Pyongyang, which connects the peninsula to the rest of the Asian continent. Denuclearizing North Korea is an important issue that must be dealt with as is the promotion of inter-Korean summits.

The Forum's first session focused on "How to Realize a Peace Economy on the Korean Peninsula."

The first speaker was **Mr. Sang-Kwon Park**, honorary chairman of Pyeonghwa Motors. Mr. Park, who headed the North Korea project for many years, visited the country 241 times since 1994, and had many occasions to meet the late Kim Jong-il, the supreme leader of North Korea from 1994 to 2011.

Mr. Park said we are living at a very important time for peace and the future of the Korean Peninsula. "We are at a crossroads. Will the North and South continue their history of conflict or will they create a new history of harmony and peace?"

The nuclear issue and the pandemic, which is preventing travel, are key obstacles blocking progress. The nuclear issue, in particular, is not only a problem for North and South Korea; it is a shared problem for the U.S. and neighboring nations. Mr. Park compared the issues on the peninsula to that of the pandemic, saying "these are global problems, which require global solutions."

The era of the peace economy must move forward, he said. Echoing Jim Rogers, he continued: "It is time to formulate an innovative peace economy that goes beyond the denuclearization issue." He highlighted the proposal to turn the DMZ into a peace park as a way to promote inter-Korean cooperation and demonstrate to the world that the challenges are not insurmountable. "If the two Koreas combine their resolve, and if the U.S. is more patient and takes the lead, I believe our countries can work together and that peaceful reunification can be achieved."



Afterwards, commentators from the U.S. and Korea interacted with the speakers.

U.S. panelists:

Hon. Newt Gingrich, former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives

Amb. Joseph DeTrani, former U.S. special envoy to the Six-Party Talks

Mr. Thomas McDevitt, chairman of *The Washington Times*

Dr. Alexandre Mansourov, adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins University

Korea panelists:

Mr. Gerard Willis, chairman of the HJ Magnolia Korea Foundation

Mr. Dal-soon Shin, president of Yongpyong Resort, Korea

Mr. Sang-kyun Kim, chairman of the HJ Magnolia Global Medical Foundation

Dr. Hyung-tae Min, professor of the Korea Institute for National Unification

Mr. Young-jae Jeon, head of Chuncheon MBC TV-Press Production Team

Mr. Guk Hwangbo, chairman of Think Tank 2022 in Gangwon-Gyeonggi provinces, Korea

The Forum's second session was "Road to a Heavenly Unified Korea: The Korea Japan Undersea Tunnel."

Speakers:

Mr. Byung-min Ahn, president of the Korea Peninsula Economic Cooperation Agency

Dr. Jae-wan Huh, professor of social sciences, Chung University, Korea

Dr. Heon-yung Jung, professor of urban engineering, Pusan National University, Korea

Mr. Young-bae Park, chairman of Think Tank 2022 Yeongnam province, Korea

Japan panelists:

Dr. Masayoshi Kajikuri, chairman of UPF-Japan and president of the International Highway Foundation, which oversees the Japan-Korea Undersea Tunnel project

Hon. Harada Yoshiaki, former minister of the environment of Japan

Dr. Noda Toshiyasu, professor of law, Seinan Gakuin University, Japan

Congratulatory video messages were given by **Hon. Dan Burton**, former U.S. Congressman and co-chairman of the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP); **Hon. John Doolittle**, former U.S. Congressman and chairman of the IAPP in North America; **Dr. Thomas G. Walsh**, chairman of UPF International; and **Mr. Thomas McDevitt**, chair of the International Association for Peace and Economic Development.

The forum concluded with participants and representatives of the IAED signing a resolution to support the peaceful reunification of Korea. The resolution calls for the development of tourism projects, construction of the Japan-Korea Undersea Tunnel project, exploration of joint ventures between the two Koreas, and the establishment of a special committee comprising members of Think Tank 2022 and the IAED to explore investment opportunities on the Korean Peninsula. The resolution was signed by Jim Rogers; UN World Food Programme (WFP) executive director, David Beasley; and many business leaders from around the world who understand the importance of trade and commerce in bringing peace and stability to the peninsula.



Dr. Young-ho Yoon read a letter from UPF co-founder **Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon**, who expressed her gratitude to all the attendees for their participation in the forum and made a generous financial contribution to show her commitment and dedication to Korean reunification.

