

IMAP USA: Korea Experts Predict No Peace, No War on the Peninsula in 2024

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January 23, 2024
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IMAP, USA - Two Korea experts presented their views in a webinar on "The Koreas in 2024: Prospects for Goodwill" sponsored by the UPF-affiliated International Media Association for Peace, on January 23, 2024. North Korea researcher Etienne Daoust and South Korea-based journalist and consultant Michael Breen offered an in-depth understanding of the Korean situation, giving their insightful and unbiased analysis.

The first speaker was Mr. Etienne Daoust, a researcher at the University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM) who has extensively studied North Korean society, including visiting the nation on numerous occasions. He commented that leadership changes in the United States, South Korea and Japan over the past several years, and their respective approaches to Korean unification, have contributed to uncertainties in the Koreas. He said that although Kim Jong Un's rhetoric of late has been somewhat threatening, his speech at the Supreme People's Assembly on January 15 focused almost exclusively on the need to improve the economy and the people's quality of life. In conclusion, he said that in 2024 there will be "no goodwill, but no war."

The second speaker was Mr. Michael Breen, founding chairman and CEO of Insight Communication Consultants, who resides in Seoul, South Korea. He highlighted three areas that are currently diminishing the hope for reconciliation between the two Koreas. First is the uncertain global environment, with worsening U.S.-China relations, wars in Ukraine and Israel, and the apparent loss of confidence in the desirability of democratic values, resulting in a strengthening of authoritarian and militaristic tendencies. Second is North Korea's changed attitude to reconciliation with the South, after Kim Jong Un announced that the North will no longer pursue unification. Third is South Korea's own attitude and its response to this change. Mr. Breen said his biggest concern is that there will be a miscalculation on either side that could lead to conflict, especially since South Korea has promised a severe and strong response to any provocation from the North.

Both speakers concluded that we are currently in a situation between war and peace, leaving a door open for hope.

The recording of this webinar is available at: [The Koreas in 2024: Prospects for Good Will - YouTube](#)