

**Asia Society Korea**

Lotte Hotel Seoul, Suite 615  
30 Eulji-ro, Jung-gu  
Seoul, Korea 04533, CPO Box 3500  
Tel: 82 2 759 7806  
Fax: 82 2 757 0034  
Email: koreacenter@asiasociety.org

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**Beyond COVID-19, Towards Humanity**



Asia Society Korea and JTBC co-produced a special video to pay tribute to all medical staff who have been selflessly fulfilling their duties to save lives and to fight against the COVID-19. Forty ambassadors in Korea have participated in this project by expressing their deepest and heartfelt gratitude in their native language.

#InThisTogether

**Interview with Darcy Paquet**



Asia Society Korea came up with a new platform of online interviews for monthly series, and invited Darcy Paquet as one of our first guests. Mr. Paquet is an American movie critic, lecturer, artistic director, author and a part-time actor. Most recently, he grabbed the media spotlight as translator of the English subtitles for director Bong Joon-ho's "Parasite," which won the Palme d'Or at the

Cannes Film Festival in 2019, and four Oscars, including the Best Picture at the 92nd Academy Awards in 2020. Mr. Paquet first came to Korea to teach English at Korea University, and has been staying in Korea for twenty-three years now. While he is well-known for his Korean movies introducing website [koreanfilm.org](http://koreanfilm.org) among non-Koreans, Mr. Paquet is more famous for his contributions to Korean movies among Koreans. Until "Parasite", he had participated in over one hundred Korean films as translator, editorial supervisor and actor. Mr. Paquet was a former contributor to Cine 21, The South China Morning Post, Variety and Screen International, and has also been teaching as a professor at Busan Asian Film School since 2017.

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## Monthly Luncheon Series

### Forecast 2020: U.S.-Asia Relations



**Mr. Glen S. Fukushima, Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress, Washington DC**

Asia Society Korea hosted its first monthly luncheon of this year, on February 12, 2020, inviting **Mr. Glen S. Fukushima**, a founding member of Asia Society Japan Center, and Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress in Washington, D.C., as guest speaker. A renowned expert on U.S. politics and U.S. foreign policy toward Asian region, Mr. Fukushima served in Washington, D.C. as Director for Japanese Affairs (1985-1988) and Deputy Assistant United States Trade Representative for Japan and China (1988-1990) at the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), Executive Office of the President. Until June 2001, he served for eight years during the Clinton Administration in the White House-appointed positions of Vice Chairman of the Japan-United States Friendship Commission and Vice Chairman of the U.S. panel

of CULCON (Joint Committee on United States-Japan Cultural and Educational Interchange).

First, he began his speech by commenting a number of Democratic Party’s presidential candidates who would confront the current president of the United States, Donald Trump, including Joe Biden, Bernie Sanders, and Pete Buttigieg. He analyzed each candidate with strengths and weaknesses, political difference with other rival candidates, as well as the difference between Donald Trump’s agendas. He also pointed out that the joining of Michael Bloomberg, a former Mayor of New York City as well as the billionaire entrepreneur, into the Primary race would bring another major shift in the race.

Second, Mr. Fukushima brought major political shifts in the U.S. in recent years. He brought the detour from global economy toward protective trade policies, newly established hostile relation with China, recovering manufacture industries in the rust-belt areas, and the rise of liberal values throughout the nation would be the major elements that will determine the qualifications of the president of 2020. Mr. Fukushima viewed that each candidate has his own strength in different aspect, and diagnosed that the candidate who has more credibility on dealing with them would win the election.

Lastly, he forecasted the upcoming dynamic shifts in U.S.-Asia relations. Bringing up several ongoing international issues such as the Hong Kong Protest, South China Sea conflict, issues with Taiwan, as well as the stagnated relation with Kim Jong Un and North Korea, Mr. Fukushima said that the East Asian region would have to face numerous regional and international issues that are directly link to each state’s own interests. He argued whether the current U.S. foreign policy toward East Asia becomes stronger, under the second administration of Donald Trump, or weaker, under a new administration from Democratic Party, it is inevitable for East Asian countries to encounter a new chapter of foreign relations, especially dealing with the United States.

**\*This series is sponsored by Lotte Chemical, Poongsan, Samjong KPMG, Lutronic, and Mr. Young Joon Kim**



## In the News: From Asia Society Policy Institute

### 새로운 미 행정부의 기후외교 전망



톰 우드루프(Thom Woodroffe) 아시아소사이어티 수석선임연구원 & 브렌던 가이(Brendan Guy) 천연자원보호협회 연구위원

미국은 온실가스를 세계에서 두번째로 많이 배출하는 국가이다. 이러한 이유로, 오는 11월 열릴 미국 대선의 결과는 앞으로의 세계 기후변화 정세에 피할 수 없는 영향을 끼칠 것이다. 또한, 유엔기후변화협약 당사국총회(COP26)가 올해 코로나19 사태로 인해 2021년으로 연기되면서 미국의 영향력이 더욱 커진 상황이다. 파리기후협약을 맺은 대부분의 아시아 국가와 세계 여러 나라들은 협약 내에 명시된 5개년 역진방지조항(5 Year Ratchet Mechanism)의 일환으로 온실가스 배출량을 줄이려 하지만, 미국은 다가오는 2021년 기후대책을 이끄는 강력한 촉매제의 역할을 할지, 협약의 실효성을 저해하는 방해꾼의 역할을 할지 결정해야하는 중요한 기로에 놓여있다.

미국의 대선에 가장 큰 관심을 갖고 있는 나라는 중국이다. 2014년 버락 오바마 전 미국 대통령과 시진핑 중국 국가주석간 체결된 미-중 기후협약에 대한 공동성명은, 두 강대국이 기후변화에 맞서 싸우겠다는 합의된 의지를 나타내며 파리기후협약 진전의 분수령이 되었다. 미국과 중국이 다시 한 번 협력하여 기후변화에 대처할지 여부에 따라 다른 주요 온실가스 배출국가들의 입장도 바뀔 것으로 보인다. 특히, 인도, 일본, 호주 등이 미국과 중국의 결정에 많은 영향을 받을 것으로 보인다.



도널드 트럼프 미국 대통령이 파리기후협약으로부터 탈퇴하여 기후변화에 대처하기 위한 조치들을 철회하는 이 시점에서, 만약 2020년 대선에서 민주당이 승리한다면, 그들은 명백히 기후변화와의 전쟁을 행정부의 우선과제로 삼을 것이다. 그렇기 때문에, 유력한 민주당 대선 후보들의 기후외교 방향을 세부적인 접근과 이해를 통해 예측하는 것만이 유엔기후변화협약 당사국총회 등에서 자국의 배출량을 염두해두고 있는 세계 여러 나라들에게 예측가능성을 높여 줄 수 있을 것이다.

이에 본 보고서는 민주당 대선 후보인 조 바이든 전 부통령과 버니 샌더스 상원의원의 기후정책을 6가지 분야로 나누어 평가한다. 해당 분야로는 각 후보의 온실가스 배출 감소를 위한 정책, 중국을 포함한 타 온실가스 배출국과의

대처 방안, 기후대처의 지렛대로써 활용될 무역정책, 기후대처 기금 인상과 화석연료 보조금 삭감 방안, 공공기관 등에서의 정책 실행방안, 마지막으로 기후대처를 핵심적인 국가안보사안으로 여기는지 등이 포함된다.

보고서는 또한 새로운 민주당 행정부가 들어설 경우, 최상의 행정부 구조, 타 온실가스 배출국과의 협상 전략, 그리고 온실가스 배출을 줄일 수 있는 동원 가능한 모든 방안 등 글로벌 기후변화 대처에 최대의 노력을 기울이기 위한 세 가지 고려사항도 제시하였다. 세부적으로는 중국에 대한 대처방안 등 현존하는 후보자들의 정책들에 대한 개선점, 행정부 초기 기후변화에 대한 국제회의를 개최하기 위한 방안, 새로운 2030 배출량 축소 계획 등이 포함 되어있다. 기후변화 대처에 있어 미국 행정부가 맞닥뜨릴 현실적인 제약과 선택사항들 또한 보고서에 담겨있다.

본 보고서는 아시아소사이어티 정책연구소가 미-중 기후협력을 관찰하는 새로운 프로젝트의 일환으로서 진행될 연구 시리즈의 첫번째 보고서이다.



## Featured Interview

### Artificial Intelligence: Past Present and Future



*Dr. Kyoung Jun Lee (left), Professor at Kyung Hee University, and Scott Orrantia (right), Asia Society Korea Program Committee member*

Asia Society Korea Program Committee member Scott Orrantia spoke with **Dr. Kyoung Jun Lee**, a professor of information systems at Kyung Hee University Business School in South Korea, An expert on artificial intelligence as well as information technology, Dr. Lee shared his thoughts on how AI can be used to enhance our lives economically and socially. He emphasized that by the technological advancement, borders between industries will collapse, hence the utilization of technology for collaboration will be ever more crucial than before.

## Online Roundtable

### Understanding the Disappearance of Kim Jong Un



*Barbara Demick (top left), former Seoul Bureau Chief of LA Times, Mason Richey (top right), Associate Professor of International Politics at Hankuk University, Andrew Salmon (bottom left), Seoul Correspondent at Asia Times, and Dr. Myong-Hyun Go (bottom right), Research Fellow at Asan Institute for Policy Studies*

**Mason Richey**, a contributing writer of Asia Society Korea and associate professor of international politics at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, led another roundtable discussion with **Barbara Demick**, former Seoul Bureau Chief of LA Times, **Andrew Salmon**, Seoul Correspondent at Asia Times, and **Dr. Myong-Hyun Go**, a research fellow at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, dealing with the ongoing rumors over Kim Jong Un’s disappearance.

## [COVID-19 Special]

### Covering the Coronavirus Crisis in Korea



*Michael Breen (left), CEO of Insight Communications, Peter Pae (middle), Seoul Bureau Chief of Bloomberg, and Andrew Salmon (right), Northeast Asia Editor of Asia Times.*

As an alternative platform of Monthly Luncheon Series amid COVID-19 crisis, Asia Society Korea came up with a featured video interview series to deliver up-to-date issues with insights from experts in various fields. For the first series, **Peter Pae**, a Seoul Bureau Chief of Bloomberg, and **Andrew Salmon**, Northeast Asia Editor of Asia Times, joined the discussion dealing with the ongoing COVID-19 situation and South Korea's reactions to overcome the crisis. The discussion was moderated by **Michael Breen**, CEO of Insight Communications, South Korea.

The two foreign correspondents opened their talks with the outburst of the number of infected in Daegu, caused by the religious community called Shincheonji. Andrew Salmon shared his experience of his visit to Daegu, at the beginning of the spread of virus, and delivered the hollowness of the city. Peter Pae followed up with some background information of the origin of Shincheonji, including how it was established and how it became a nationwide religion in South Korea.

They also commented on how Korean people have effectively prevented the further spread of the virus. Andrew Salmon mentioned that his previous opinions on wearing masks have changed thanks to the case of Korea, and praised the guidance of KCDC authorities as well as people's thorough participations. Peter Pae also pointed out that many Korean people wear mask to prevent themselves from spreading the pandemic, not to protect themselves from the infection.

Lastly, both journalists showed their interests in South Korea's proactive actions to conduct massive tests, such as drive-thru testing process. They both agreed that South Korea has well managed the outburst of the pandemic compared to other foreign cases.

### Korea on the World Stage: Elections and International Affairs in the Time of COVID-19



*Dr. Myong-Hyun Go (left), Research Fellow at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, Duyeon Kim (right), Senior Advisor at International Crisis Group*

Amid COVID-19 Crisis, Asia Society Korea initiated an Online Roundtable, as an alternative platform of Monthly Luncheon. For the first roundtable, **Mason Richey**, a contributing writer of Asia Society Korea and an associate professor of international politics at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies led the discussion with **Duyeon Kim**, a Senior Advisor at International Crisis Group, and **Dr. Myong-Hyun Go**, a research fellow at the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, covering overall issues that Korea is undergoing nowadays, including COVID-19, the general election of 2020, and the ROK-U.S. alliance, etc.

## [COVID-19 Special]

### 팬데믹 사태가 미-중 긴장관계를 완화할 수 있을까?



웬디 커틀러 (Wendy Cutler) 아시아소사이어티 정책연구소 부소장 & 다니엘 러셀 (Daniel Russel) 아시아소사이어티 정책연구소 부소장, 2020년 4월 7일 포린폴리시 특별칼럼 기고문

코로나바이러스가 전세계로 퍼지면서, 세계가 얼마나 복잡하게 연결되었는지 새삼 깨닫게 하고 있다. 바이러스는 오늘날 우리의 국제 공급망을 위협하고 있으며, 오로지 국제적 협력만이 이를 막을 수 있다. 하지만 지난 몇달간 미국과 중국의 당국자들간 오고 간 말의 전쟁은 바이러스가 두 나라의 관계를 최악으로 치닫게 할 수도 있다는 점을 시사했다. 비록 최근 들어 비난의 강도가 다소 약해지면서 어느정도 협력의 여지가 열리고는 있지만, 백신 개발, 생명구조 의료물품의 빠른 보급, 그리고 국제 공급망을 유지하는 영역에 걸쳐서는 더욱 긴밀한 협력을 해야 할 필요가 있다.

미-중 관계는 지난해 12월 중국 우한에서 바이러스가 발견되기 이전부터 급격히 냉각되었다. 대만과 남중국해 등의 오랜 논쟁의 영역에서 양국간 대립이 심화되었으며, 인권, 사이버 범죄, 그리고 홍콩과 관련한 의견대립 또한 계속되어왔거나 더욱 악화되었다. 18개월간 보복 관세를 높여온 무역전쟁은 잠시 일단락되었지만 완전히 끝난 것은 아니며, 5G와 인공지능과 같은 첨단 기술산업, 중국의 외신기자 퇴출 등 치열한 공방이 두 정부간 정기적인 대화가 사라지면서 이어져왔다.

이러한 면에서, 두 나라에서 코로나바이러스 이슈가 매우 정치적으로 사용되었다는 점은 그리 놀랍지 않다. 도널드 트럼프 미국 대통령의 한 측근은 바이러스가 우한의 생화학 연구소에서 만들어졌다는 주장을 내비쳤다. 반면, 중국 정부 대변인은 미군이 우한에 퍼뜨린 것이라고 맞받아쳤다. 한 미국 고위 관료는 현재의 위기가 제조업 일자리를 미국으로 되돌아오게 할 것이라며 공공연히 긍정적인 평가를 내리기도 했다. 바이러스가 캘리포니아와 뉴욕에 퍼지자, 중국 고위 당국자들은 미국에 대한 냉소를 과시했다. 은폐와 무능에 대한 비난은 서로를 깎아내리기 위해 더욱 과열되고 있으며, 각자 서로의 정부체계가 바이러스 퇴치와 방역에 더욱 적합한 것이라고 주장하고 있다.

이는 승자는 없이 패자만 남는 게임이다. 선전과 비난은 바이러스를 잡을 수도, 악화하는 경제를 되살릴 수도 없다. 세계에서 경제규모가 가장 큰 두 나라의 비난전은 국제경제에 부정적인 파장을 초래할 것이다. 주미중국 대사인 추이텐가이는 최근 약시오스와의 인터뷰에서 주변의 음모론과 거리를 두고, 미국과 중국은 서로 비난 (denunciation)을 할 것이 아니라 감정을 가라앉혀야 한다(de-escalation)는 메시지를 조심스럽게 전했다. 이러한 그의 메시지는 양국이 지금과 같은 중요한 시기에 협력적인 관계로 나아가갈 여지를 준 것으로 보인다.



## [COVID-19 Special]

# South Korea, Coronavirus, and the Janus Face of Globalization



*Mason Richey, Associate Professor of International Politics at Hankuk University and contributing writer of Asia Society*

By **Mason Richey** — Thinking back on a decade of developments in South Korea, it is remarkable how prevalent the country has been on the global stage. Ten years ago, this month, president Lee Myung-bak’s “Global Korea” initiative was in full swing and Samsung had just launched the revolutionarily stylish Galaxy-S series. Of course this was also taking place in the shadows of North Korea’s newfound status as a nuclear weapon state and the 2009 H1N1 swine flu outbreak that gripped the world, including South Korea. In the last ten years the world has witnessed the surprisingly misnamed Land of Morning Calm grow ever more into its role as a major axis of tumultuous globalization. As South Korea reels from the whiplash of soft power triumph—*Parasite*’s many Oscars—followed by the tragedy of a major COVID-19 epidemic, it is worth reflecting on how central South Korea has become to international society, for both good and bad, and how much of that society will persist post-coronavirus pandemic.

### **2010-2020: May You Live in Interesting Times**

2010 brought with it the violent sinking of the South Korean naval corvette ROKS Cheonan, masterminded by North Korea, in which 46 sailors were killed. This was followed by South-North maritime skirmishes along the Northern Limit Line and North Korean shelling of the South Korean island of Yeonpyeong. More positively, 2010 also saw Seoul host the G20, Mokpo hold the first F1 Korea Grand Prix, and Kim Yuna win gold at the Winter Olympics.

The next year was mostly quiet, although the death of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il in December 2011 cocked eyebrows. But 2012 more than compensated. The US-South Korea Free Trade Agreement entered into force, Seoul hosted the Nuclear Security Summit with 55 world leaders in attendance, and the country held a presidential election narrowly won by conservative Park Geun-hye. The Seoul-Washington partnership struggled to understand the direction of North Korea following Kim Jong-un’s assumption of Worker’s Party leadership and the embarrassing failure of the Leap Day agreement. The latter fell apart when Pyongyang launched a Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV) only weeks after signing.

2013 saw South Korea suffer major cyber attacks by North Korea, alerting the world to the Kim regime’s offensive cyber capabilities (which have now become a major problem). North Korea also carried out its third nuclear test detonation at Punggye-ri. 2014, on the one hand, witnessed the inking of South Korean trade deals with Australia and Canada, as well as a highly successful edition of the Asian Games in Incheon. On the other hand, the Incheon-based Sewol ferry capsized, killing 300 passengers, mostly young students on a class trip. The tragedy captured extensive international media coverage of South Korean political incompetence and corruption. The crass arrogance and indifference of South Korea’s elite were again exposed to international scrutiny by media reporting on the “Nut Rage” incident, in which Cho Hyun-ah, heiress and Vice-President at Korean Air, assaulted cabin crew for their presentation of macadamias, leading to delay of a flight to New York.

South Korea also garnered negative attention in March 2015, as a crazed Korean nationalist with a 25cm knife slashed US Ambassador Mark Lippert in the face and arm prior to a speech in Seoul. In May, South Korea experienced the beginning of a beta-coronavirus outbreak leading to dozens of deaths from Middle East Respiratory Syndrome. South-North tensions flared enormously in August, with both sides firing cross-border artillery. My off the record discussions with US military in South Korea indicated that they were genuinely worried—for the first time ever—that conflict might spiral out of control.

Turmoil marked 2016. Scandalous corruption by and around president Park sparked protests by millions of everyday Koreans—the Candlelight Vigils at Seoul’s central Gwanghwamun Square received extensive international attention for their peacefulness

## [COVID-19 Special]

and symbolism in demonstrating the maturation of Korean democracy. They were also powerful, leading to Park's impeachment and removal from office. North Korea conducted two successful nuclear test detonations, an SLV launch, and multiple ballistic missile tests, putting pressure on the US-South Korea strategy for dealing with Pyongyang. South Korea also closed the Kaesong Industrial Complex, the last major project of inter-Korean cooperation, and started negotiations on installation of a US-provided Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system. China, which objects to THAAD on South Korean territory, has gotten international notoriety for punishing Seoul with unjustified trade restrictions ever since.

Donald Trump assumed the presidency of the US in January 2017, and, on foreign policy, did so with an overriding concern: North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Inevitably this swept South Korea—and its newly elected progressive president Moon Jae-in—into the tension of a year that became known for “fire and fury.” The world watched with worried fascination as Trump and Kim exchanged threats and insults. North Korea tested its sixth nuclear device, as well as two intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and medium-range missiles overflying Japan. Washington and Pyongyang were on the brink of war, and global leaders looked expectantly to the South to find a way to provide a diplomatic off-ramp.

President Moon accomplished that with panache, and was rightly feted for it around the world. He deftly used the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang as a springboard for Korean peninsula diplomacy—the sight of North and South teams marching together under a unification flag at the opening ceremony remains an iconic image. Following that, Moon led the way on inter-Korean reconciliation—including summits with Kim—that spilled over to improved US-North Korea relations, which in turn culminated in a Trump-Kim summit in Singapore.

Over the last year—2019 and the first three months of 2020—Seoul and Tokyo have been in an ongoing conflict over historical issues, trade restrictions, tit-for-tat entry restrictions, North Korea policy, and security cooperation, the latter prompting the US to intervene in order to prop up its regional alliance network. The world watched as Trump, Kim, and Moon met briefly together in June 2019 at Panmunjom, on the de facto South-North border, in the hopes that stalled denuclearization negotiations would recommence. South Korea's soft power has also been at the fore. Two beloved international K-Pop stars committed suicide in late 2019, even as BTS was conquering the global entertainment world. Meanwhile Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite* snowballed into an international sensation, becoming the first non-English language film to win the Academy Award for Best Picture. In recent weeks South Korea has been global front page news for its high number of COVID-19 cases, many of which due to a bizarre quasi-Christian sect spotlighting South Korea's sometimes lurid religious landscape.

### **No Such Thing As Bad Publicity?**

The above history counts more than forty discrete events—almost one a quarter for a decade!—that have received extensive international attention. For a small country located far away from global power centers in Washington, New York, London, Paris, Berlin, or Brussels, South Korea punches way above its weight in terms of international mindshare. Of course a lot of that is negative.

Like Icarus, South Korea is often noticed for the wrong reasons. Nonetheless it has substantial soft power, albeit of a weird sort in which international attraction and repulsion are interweaved. Take *Parasite*, an astonishing, elegant global film sensation that portrays an unflattering image of South Korea's yawning gulf of systemic socio-economic inequality. Or COVID-19: the early, fast-moving, massive outbreak has hardly left South Korea in an enviable situation, yet Seoul is receiving accolades for its transparency and competence in testing for cases and managing the epidemic, serving as a model for other countries' efforts to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

As the pandemic continues growing, supply chains are disrupted, economies are devastated, and states blame outsiders for the misery, there is a real possibility that the future will be a lot less globalized. Influential mid-sized countries like South Korea may find themselves in a world with fewer links to states both near and far. This would be a shame, as South Korea's experiences over the last decade have been a valuable microcosm of the human condition. Triumph and tragedy are two sons of the same earth—they are inseparable.



## INNOVATIVE MINDS

# COVID-19 Breakthrough: A 'Drive-Thru Lunch Box' Service



Amid the Coronavirus crisis that is striking the global economy, several Korean corporations have been coming up with ideas to assist the public and to offer better options for their customers' needs. Lotte Hotel Seoul initiated a non-face-to-face service platform for a drive-thru lunch box service on March 19th, 2020.

Asia Society Korea interviewed the general manager of Lotte Hotel Seoul, **Mr. Jason S. Cho**, regarding this innovative project.

**1. COVID-19 has become a critical issue impacting both the Korean and global economy. How has Lotte Hotel Seoul been managing this crisis?**

Considering the location and flow of foreign guests, Lotte Hotel Seoul is located at one of the riskiest points in Seoul, as it is adjacent to City Hall with the palaces to the west and Myeongdong to the east. As we are well aware of the severity of this issue, we have elevated safety practices and worked to maintain the hygiene of our facility at the highest level.

Not only have we limited the number of entrances to the hotel, installed thermal cameras, and checked the body temperatures of every entering guest, we are also conducting regular disinfection and fumigation procedures for all our facilities. Moreover, we have increased the distances between the tables and chairs in all our restaurants, cafés, and bars in order to reduce the possibility of any potential infections.

Additionally, we feel that it is the most important to support and aid those who are fighting to stop the spread of the virus. In that regard, we delivered 2,000 pieces of sweet red-bean bun to the medical staff in Daegu as a small token of our appreciation for their tireless dedication. We wanted to support them using our strengths, and serving high-quality food supplies was what we decided on. We will continue to look for more ways to support them. We are all in this together.



**Lotte Hotel Seoul delivered 2,000 pieces of sweet red-bean bread to the medical staffs in Daegu on March 12, 2020**

**2. How did you come-up with the idea of a drive-thru service?**

Regardless of our strictest attention to the disinfection of this facility, we cannot deny that there are still concerns regarding potential infections in public areas. Reservation cancellations for rooms and restaurants have increased over the last couple of weeks and people still worry despite our best efforts, which is understandable.

This led us to come up with the idea of a drive-thru service. Currently the KCDC (Korea Center for Disease Control of Prevention) is conducting drive-thru virus testing, which has increased the efficacy of the testing process while keeping the possibility of infections among medical staff low. Also, due to the fear of face-to-face contact, more people are purchasing their meals through a delivery service, which involves less contact. Combining these ideas, we designed a non-face-to-face drive-thru service, a platform that keeps physical human contact to a minimum, but still allows customers to enjoy high-quality cuisine from a 5-star hotel.

We are also brainstorming new ways to satisfy our guests and the non-face-to-face drive-thru lunch box service is only the beginning.

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*Mr. Jason S. Cho, General Manager of Lotte Hotel Seoul*

### 3. What is the most important value when it comes to the hotel industry or other sectors of the service industry?

As a hotelier, the satisfaction of our guests is our highest priority. And when we say ‘our guests’, it is not limited to the people who actually stay at the hotel. Anyone can come and use our facilities; hence, everyone can be our customer. Our drive-thru platform is available online, so it is not limited to guests staying at the hotel.

During this difficult time, we are taking extra care to maintain customer satisfaction and minimize their concerns. We are always thinking of new ways to

provide the best quality service to more people. We will strive to design more customer-friendly service platforms, even after the crisis has passed. For us, our business is a continuous process of staying one step ahead of everyone else.

## Industry Actions to Overcome COVID-19



Many Korean businesses are working in concert to help prevent COVID-19 from spreading. While working to protect its employees, customers, and partners, they are actively cooperating with various parties and organizations to stop the virus from spreading and restoring damage to our communities. In this regard, Asia Society Korea interviewed the executives at LOTTE Group, South Korea’s fifth-largest conglomerate, regarding their proactive protective measures to overcome COVID-19.

LOTTE Group is featuring the four key business domains of food & beverage, retail, chemicals, and hotels in over 36 countries. They are currently employing various measures to not only protect its employees and customers, but to help curtail the spread of COVID-19. In addition to strictly complying with Korea Centers for Disease Control & Prevention’s (KCDC) guidelines, LOTTE Group

and its affiliates have proactively implemented independent and stronger preventive measures in all of its business locations since the beginning of the pandemic. These collective measures have allowed LOTTE employees to work in a safe environment while also providing customers with a sense of relief when visiting LOTTE facilities. LOTTE is also spearheading efforts to support partners and community members affected by the virus.

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## **Operating a group control tower to coordinate against COVID-19**

After the first confirmed case in Korea last January, LOTTE Group immediately began monitoring the situation by securing adequate amounts of sanitization equipment, distributing preventive guidelines, and directing employees who had travelled to affected areas to work from home. The group also utilized its sourcing capacities to provide free protective masks for its employees in order to prevent the virus from spreading internally. As confirmed cases began to rise sharply in February, LOTTE Group deployed a task force (C-TFT) and opened synchronous communication channels with its fifty plus affiliates and twenty thousand business locations. Through this visibility, they were able to react in a timely manner and apply appropriate measures to mitigate further risks.

## **Thorough disinfection and preventative measures in business locations**

LOTTE currently operates several multifunction facilities such as department stores, shopping malls, amusement parks, and hotels. To ensure customer's safety in these facilities, LOTTE has installed thermal cameras, sanitization products, and preventive guideline posters at all entry and exit points. Main facilities are fully sterilized once a day while frequently contacted objects such as shopping carts and escalator handles are sterilized repeatedly.

If a confirmed patient is found to have visited a LOTTE facility, the management immediately informs the KCDC to ask for their cooperation to trace the patient's exact travel route within the facility and such facts are transparently released to the public as per the KCDC's recommendation. In addition, the facility is thoroughly sterilized, and employees who came in contact with the confirmed patient are immediately tested and placed in self-quarantine for two weeks.

## **Work guidelines for employees to curtail the spread of COVID-19**

LOTTE provided all of its employees with a 'COVID-19 Working Guideline' on February 25th. The guideline's objective is to ensure the health and wellness of employees and their family members while also preventing the mass closure of workplaces.

"Working from home" is implemented by taking into account the nature of the business. For some businesses, all employees can work from home while other businesses divide employees into two or three groups and rotate personnel working from home. Employees who are pregnant or have a prior medical history however are required to work from home. These actions not only help prevent the spread of the virus within the company, but also train and familiarize employees with different work environments in case such measures are necessitated by the virus.

To minimize interpersonal contact for on-site employees, LOTTE affiliates are currently implementing flexible working hours so that employees can avoid using public transportation during rush hours. Workshops and gatherings have been banned, while all meetings are recommended to be carried out through video conferencing.

Employees who come to work are checked every day for fevers or symptoms. During working hours, employees are required to wear protective masks and disinfect their hands with hand sanitizer from time to time to prevent the spread of the virus. In line with social distancing efforts, LOTTE has also limited the use of the staff cafeteria during the lunch hours.

Employees using the cafeteria are required to all sit facing one direction or in a zigzag to limit contact while eating. Lunch boxes for employees are also being prepared so that employees may eat separately at their own seats.

Due to these proactive measures within the workplace, only 3 out of LOTTE's 230,000 employees had contracted the virus as of March 25.



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### Supporting partners and the community

LOTTE is also carrying out various efforts to support its partners and community members affected by COVID-19. To help prevent the spread of the virus and support those already affected, LOTTE has donated approximately one million USD as of February of this year.

In particular, these contributions have prioritized helping children who were not receiving adequate welfare care due to COVID-19. With many welfare facilities being closed down to prevent the spread of COVID-19, LOTTE has provided food supplies to affected children so that they will have enough food this month. LOTTE has also supported lower-income households, senior citizens, and healthcare workers with sanitization products, daily necessities, and food.

LOTTE group also utilized the world's fifth tallest building, LOTTE World Tower, to send supportive messages to those affected by the pandemic. In the initial stages of the outbreak, supportive messages for Wuhan citizens were shown and they were followed by messages such as 'Cheer up Daegu Kyungbook', 'Let's get through this, Korea', and 'Thank you Medical Staff'.

LOTTE Asset Development, an affiliate operating shopping malls, has delayed rent payments for small and medium-sized enterprises affected by the virus. LOTTE Homeshopping and LOTTE Himart are providing free sanitization services for partner facilities. LOTTE Duty Free has donated daily necessities while 7-11 is providing a portion of its revenues to healthcare workers to procure medical equipment.

## LOTTE Chemical Begins 'Constructing a Virtuous Plastic Recycling System'



Project LOOP

Originally invented as a substitute for ivory when making billiard balls, plastic has become a material that we encounter daily. In fact, plastic is so entrenched in our daily lives that it is hard to imagine a plastic-free world.

Despite its cost efficiency and convenience, however, plastic is one of the most harmful products to our environment when improperly discarded. As part of the solution for this dilemma, LOTTE Chemical initiated 'Project LOOP' with seven related corporations and organizations to construct a virtuous plastic recycling system. Asia Society Korea interviewed **Mr. Gyo-Hyun Kim**, the CEO of LOTTE Chemical, to learn more about this project.

### I. How did you come up with this project?

During my numerous years in this industry, it has always pained me to see plastic continuously criticized. As I always say, it is the throwing away of plastic that causes the problem, not plastic itself. We cannot deny that a world without plastic, a 'plastic-free world', is impossible. Thus, it is only logical to approach the plastic waste problem as a 'how to properly use and discard plastic' issue rather than a 'how not to use plastic' issue.

According to the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), humanity has created 8.3 billion metric tons of plastics, of which only nine percent was recycled. Naturally, the issue of plastic waste should focus on how to recycle the remaining 91 percent. This project aims to create a 'Virtuous Plastic Recycling System' that increases the plastic recycling rate and constructs a self-sustaining plastic environment.

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### 2. Can you briefly explain the recycling process?

'Project LOOP' is an initiative where eight different corporations and organizations have gathered together with one objective: "to construct a Virtuous Plastic Recycling System".

LOTTE Chemical and IMPACT SQUARE have taken charge of the overall design and coordination of this project, and SuperBin has taken the responsibility of collecting discarded PET bottles with its automatic plastic collecting AI robot, Nephron. Kumhofiber will transform the used plastic into flakes – a form of raw plastic material – that will then be reprocessed into fiber materials by the Korea Textile Development Institute (KTDI). Finally, LAR, Project BYond, and Re-Velop will produce final goods, such as shoes, bags, and other fashion goods.

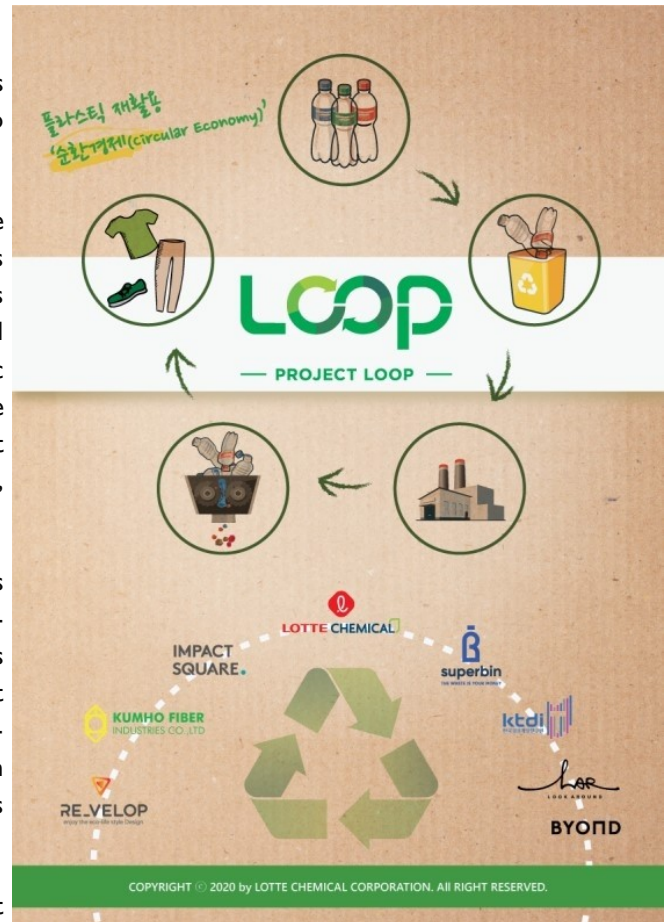
As you can see, the entire recycling process is an intricate process that requires various counterparts and their expertise. This project was only possible thanks to the participation of various groups that felt responsible for the numerous environmental issues that humanity is facing. We are grateful to the corporations and organizations that joined our mission, and we will continue to search for ways to contribute to a better society through our strengths and abilities.

### 3. What are your expectations for this project in both the short term and the long term?

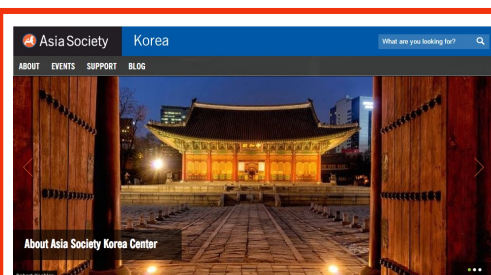
As for the short-term prospects, I hope that this project directs the public's attention to the ongoing environmental crisis that we face today. This project was possible thanks to the help of other eco-friendly groups, but it will only accomplish half its mission without the participation of citizens. I sincerely hope that the public will complete the other half of the mission by actively participating in the construction of a virtuous plastic recycling system.

For the long-term prospects, I hope that our mission will be the start of many more projects to come. While it may be difficult and impractical for us to decrease the use of plastic at a significant level, we can always think of innovative ideas that will save our environment while maintaining the same standard of living that we enjoy today.

The plastic issue that we now face calls for collective global action in which both corporations and citizens must actively participate. Each baby step that we take will gradually merge into one giant step toward a sustainable future.



Process of Project LOOP



**Join us and take part in endeavors to promote Asia awareness to the world  
BECOME A MEMBER NOW!**

***If you want to become a member, please do not hesitate to contact us!***

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# Implications of COVID-19 on the Global Economy



*Ohad Topor, CEO, TCK Investments*

**Mr. Ohad Topor** is CEO as well as chief investment officer of TCK Investments. During the last 20 years, Mr. Topor has invested across most major asset classes globally. He is an advisor to the Korea Israel Innovation Center. He holds a Masters in Business (MBA) from Stanford University and a B.A in Economics from Tel Aviv University.

**Korea has been applauded for how it handled the COVID-19 crisis and appears to have flattened the curve. Mask distribution has also reached a manageable level and there is no panic buying of supplies like in the U.S. or UK. Can we view these features as signs of a stable economy in Korea or do you believe there are still dangers for the Korean economy?**

Korea contained the epidemic in a very impressive way, and it is serving as an example for the whole world on how to manage such a crisis. But in terms of the economy, I think that Korea is facing higher risks than a typical country, because of the export nature of its economy. 44% of Korea's GDP is exports.

This pandemic is not just a healthcare crisis, but also a globalization crisis. I fear that, after the urgency of this healthcare crisis fades, governments will start to impose protectionist measures, especially in key industries. I see a rethinking of trade policies and free trade agreements, at least in certain key strategic sectors, but possibly also in broader areas. I really hope that this doesn't happen, because I think that globalization has been a huge benefit for the world. It has helped increase the understanding between cultures and countries, and it has actually reduced the risk of war by having countries relying on each other for key economic processes like supply chains and other key bilateral investments. Globalization contributed immensely to the peaceful era that we have been enjoying for many decades.

As an exporting nation, Korea could face a second-stage economic impact once consumers and businesses in Western countries adjust their purchasing habits, which could reduce the demand for products coming from Korea and other exporters. I think there is still uncertainty about the Korean economy and some risk to the downside, but again I'm more worried about anti-globalization tendencies which I think are counter to where the world should be going, especially after this healthcare crisis, that showed that



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global collaboration was necessary and wasn't done in a good enough fashion.

**Korea has risen up to become a developed country that has experienced rapid growth since the 1950s. Some would praise Korea's so-called 'Miracle of Han River', but others worry that Korea's economy is vulnerable to global trends as it is over-dependent on overseas exports and international markets. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Korea's current economic situation?**

As I mentioned in the answer before, Korea is heavily skewed towards exports, but that is not a bad thing. It's actually a very natural thing to bring a country up the ladder of GDP per capita via manufacturing and exports, until you get to a rich enough level where there is stronger domestic demand and the population consumes more goods and especially services produced domestically. The fact that Korea has relied on exports until now is not a bad thing, and actually there is still room to grow in exports.

Korea is now in the club of countries with over \$30,000 income per capita. I think that until Korea gets to \$35,000, traditional exports should be a main driver of GDP, but not the only driver. Korea should think more about higher value-added areas of entrepreneurship, high-tech, entertainment and other areas Korea has shown an advantage. You mention over reliance on foreign investors, and this is a common thing in news paper in Korea. I think the economy is naturally exposed to global trends, but not over-dependent. I think that it is right for Korea to rely on international markets and investors, because if Korea was not open to international markets, for example limiting how foreigners invest, the cost of capital for Korean companies would be much higher, and this is a critical component in your competitiveness. I know that many people look at the openness of Korea's financial markets and say it's an ATM of global institutional investors: these investors come in when it's a good time and they take the money out quickly when it's a bad time. I don't see this as a negative thing, I see it as very important that foreign investors can invest in Korea, because that allows Korean companies to grow and compete with a low cost of capital that Korea's competitors have. If Korea did not have this openness and did not allow foreign investors to buy Korean stocks and participate in the growth of Korea, then your competitors (namely countries like China and Japan) would win the long-term economic race. Especially in China, there is a lot of government support to companies and in Japan companies benefit from a very low cost of capital due to the Bank of Japan's extremely accommodative monetary policy. Even if it seems a little uncomfortable that foreigners can come in and out, which is natural because Korea is not a very big market (less than 2% percent of global corporate market capitalization), openness is a necessary component for its success. I don't think Korea would have been as successful as it is, if it did not have open financial markets and solely continued to rely on government capital support.

**COVID-19 has now become a global pandemic and many countries are releasing emergency loans to prevent economic crises. How effective will they be, and what other measures could be considered for economic protection?**

A lot of countries have quickly approved record amounts of economic relief measures and other stimulative policies. For example, the CARES Act in the United States amounts to a stimulus of \$2.3 trillion, approximately 11% of its GDP, or 66% of the total US tax revenues for 2019. The 2008 crisis taught many policymakers that government intervention at the right time and of the right strength was very helpful in stabilizing the economy. It's important that it is very sizable and very fast in order for it to achieve its stabilization goal. There is a big debate now about whether it's healthy for the economy that the government steps in such an aggressive way, because it's basically increasing liquidity and stability in an artificial way, not through real demand. But history does show that, during recessions, increasing government spending and the monetary base has been a very good balancing act, that enabled companies to lower the volatility of their hiring, spending and investment decisions. The measures taken by governments, especially in major developed markets like the US, are the largest ever seen. As containment measures halt consumption in so many countries, the governments are giving companies grants and loans to cover the cost of keeping people employed, or even hiring people directly via government-led activities. So it's a very big stimulus, and I think it has the potential of being a successful balancing act over the long-term. The low interest rates and the extreme stimulus we're seeing around the world will eventually have a cost, the scope of which is unclear right now.

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**China became the second largest economy of the world, surpassing Japan, following the Global Market Crisis in 2008. Do you think that there will be a dynamic shift in the international order in terms of economic power in the near future?**

China is clearly a global leader and a dominant player economically. China has a well-coordinated economic system with a clear direction from the very top, and a very entrepreneurial population that is eager to do better than their previous generations. China enjoyed tremendous economic success, and its population climbed the income ladder faster than any other major country in history. China's economic rise is filled with good examples of business leaders who were able to achieve huge success, and these examples are a strong driver of Chinese entrepreneurship. This is playing a big role in China's rapid rise in the technology sphere, and in transitioning from a low-value added manufacturing hub to a high-value added diversified economy. Another key benefit is that China is a very big country, with a population larger than the USA and Europe put together. As income growth continues, it reaches more corners of China, including many areas with bigger potential that started from a very low base.

On the other hand, we have to look at the risks, because China has reached this stage very rapidly, and the speed of its uninterrupted economic growth typically comes at the cost of growing imbalances under the surface. In an open free-market economic system, the economy is typically allowed to burst and correct itself along the way, but in China the government is the only authority with the power to step in and correct those imbalances. This means that the government is required to constantly make the right decisions in terms of managing asset bubbles, at such scale that it's hard to feel entirely comfortable that they will be able to always manage all the imbalances that will keep surfacing in their economy.

The second risk is China's aging population. I am from an economic school of thought that believes that demographics are one of the most important metrics to project the growth of a nation's economy. It's difficult to maintain the same growth rate while the population is on a declining trend, which is a strong headwind for China. The period of rapid easy growth, fueled by manufacturing, export and population growth, is already in the past.

The third risk is the wealth inequality between people and regions within China. It's hard to talk about China as one country, because there are pockets of extreme wealth that are comparable to those found in the top wealthy nations, and there are some other areas that are extremely underdeveloped. Not only China cannot continue to grow indefinitely at this fast pace, but it's also difficult to balance out the wealth across the regions in a way that doesn't discourage private entrepreneurship. The US has built a country based on private entrepreneurship over many generations, while China is doing it very quickly over 1-2 generations. There are many unknowns when you are working at a transformation of this scale.

**The G2 rivalry between the U.S. and China is a heated topic among politicians and economists. Some even view this rivalry as the 'Neo-Cold War Era'. How do you view the G2 rivalry, and how will it affect the global economy?**

The current political environment in many Western countries (including the US) is trending towards greater support for protectionist policies and more populist ideas. We are all familiar with the political slogans suggesting "each country for its own". However, I think that cooperation is needed between countries like the US and China, as it fueled the growth of both countries over the last 30 years. The US is consuming China's goods and China is financing the US by buying its Treasury bonds, which was one of the most profitable forms of cooperation in history.

If we continue to see a continuation of protectionist sentiment, we will see diminished collaboration between countries. But I also think there is a possibility of a reversal of some of these protectionist measures over time. I believe that, over the long term, the world is moving more towards globalization with episodes of short-term retreats towards de-globalization. For example, in his best-selling book *Homo Sapiens*, Israeli professor Yuval Noah Harari wrote that it's very clear that humanity has been moving towards globalization for centuries and the intertwining of interests between countries. Even if there are short periods of retreat from that trend.

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In the short-term, the rivalry between the USA and China has negative implications, but I don't think it will result in a war. I think that the economic cooperation between those countries will take a hit, and many other countries will re-orient themselves towards inward-looking trade policies for the next short-chapter, trying to gain an edge internally and making sure that strategic industries are supported. But over the longer term I see international cooperation coming back, because there is a clear competitive advantage coming from cooperation between countries, and there will always be a mutual economic incentive to do so. The winners of today's economy are winners because they found ways to collaborate properly, and I think the US in China will find a mutually-beneficial way to work together in the future again.

### **As a final question, what are your overall expectations for the global economy and for the Korean economy this year and beyond?**

The issue with economic forecasting this year is that this has been a very rapid recession, paired with an equally rapid crash in asset prices, as governments around the world basically closed down their economies. We're seeing unprecedented forecasts of lower GDP numbers, and now seems very clear that the drop in GDP is far bigger than that seen in the 2008 crisis. But this does not mean that we can project that markets must decline further from here, because the government stimulus is a very big counter-factor. This is positive for investors, at the time of this interview, there are many signs that investors are gaining comfort with the progress. I am personally a bit more skeptical.

In terms of the global economy, there are pockets of risk in illiquid markets. A lot of investors have put vast amounts of money in illiquid asset classes, while accepting fairly low returns. These are assets like real estate, private equity, leveraged buyouts and other types of illiquid products in which investors are required to lock up their money for years. These type of investments have ballooned globally (as well as in Korea) in the last 10 years.

I think there is a big risk of a domino effect in private illiquid markets, once we start to see losses. For example, we saw that Softbank is now expecting record losses of \$24 billion from its Vision fund and its VC investments in private companies WeWork and OneWeb. Those losses for a big player like Softbank can have a domino effect in forcing downward revisions of valuations of private technology companies and Venture Capital investments. Illiquidity is a global issue, that I think could have a negative effect on the entire global economy.

The second thing to watch is of course the situation in China, where the economy is seen slowing to the weakest growth pace since at least 1980. Many issues tend to surface during periods of economic slowdowns, so we need to see how this plays out in China. Otherwise, with this huge global stimulus in place, and the fact that yields on low-risk assets are so low, money is forced into higher-risk assets, like equities, whose prices could increase as a result.

As far as Korea is concerned, as I said, exporting nations are at higher risk than the average nation, and Korea is among them. The reduction of import in big Western markets will affect exporting nations like Korea more than others. On a positive note, I think that Korea is extremely talented in reinventing itself and re-orienting its path to achieve its long-term goals. The population is very diligent in its work, and my experience of managing a company in Korea and investing has been extremely positive. Our clients are very smart business leaders and can navigate the waters if needed. I think that Korea has a huge amount of talent, a very unique quality that I haven't seen in many countries where I have been active. Right now, businesses need to make the right decisions in terms of how they invest, and the government needs to enable businesses and their owners to take the economy forward, while giving them enough support to comfortably take the necessary risks. I am seeing some business owners in Korea, either working with TCK or with others, making some very smart long-term investment decisions, either for themselves as individuals or for their companies, and I think that's very encouraging to see. Thank you.



## [COVID-19 Special] Ambassador Interviews

### H.E. Petko Draganov, Ambassador of Bulgaria



#### 1. How are you and your embassy handling this situation?

We are emphasizing respiratory etiquette and hygiene by all staff and placing hand hygiene and alcohol-based sanitizing spray at the entrance to our workplace and in other workplace areas where they are likely to be seen. Also at the moment, our Embassy is restricting visits from outside and reducing meetings at the Embassy to the necessary minimum. For urgent consular matters, we guide visitors directly to a separate room and use gloves and masks when receiving them.

We regularly have internal staff meetings and also use a social media chat room to exchange current situation and to share alerts and valuable information from the Korean government.

The Embassy provides masks, hand sanitizer, and alcohol-based aerosol sprays to the staff for use in the office and at home and ensure that adequate supplies are maintained.

To minimize contact on public transport, the Korean staff are working flexible hours and from home.

#### 2. How much impact has the Coronavirus outbreak had thus far in your home country?

Bulgaria's parliament has declared a state of emergency until April 13. Under the emergency rules, schools, universities, and kindergartens will remain closed until March 29 and visits to gyms, cinemas, bars, restaurants, and shops except for supermarkets and pharmacies will be banned. The rapid spread of the coronavirus has plagued the Bulgarian travel and tourism industry.

Bulgaria is following WHO and ECDC guidance on threat mitigation. The Bulgarian government has banned the entry of travelers from the 16 hardest hit countries beginning March 18. Bulgaria has so far reported two fatalities from COVID-19 within its borders. For travelers from Korea, the quarantine period is 14 days.

#### 3. What are the views/ lessons learned from Asia (Public health? Societal? What worked? What didn't?)

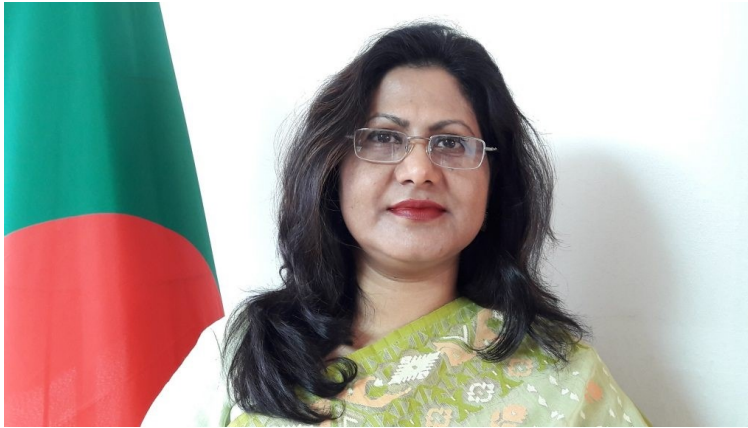
I believe the RoK is demonstrating the best model for action in halting the spread of the corona virus so far: good organization and inter-institutional cooperation paired with full transparency and massive free testing and treatment of all possible cases of infection; innovative approaches like drive-through testing centers and smart phone apps - all done in following the recommendations of the WHO. Worries remain about infections in various social gathering places and the government may need to suspend such gatherings strictly during this difficult period. Also, foreigners living in Korea who do not have the local national health insurance may have difficulties purchasing masks but we expect some solutions will be worked out. It looks like it is going to be a long fight, and the nations of the world need to cooperate more closely in tackling the pandemic.

#### 4. What types of initiatives are you planning to build with Korea when this crisis is over?

This year is the 30th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Bulgaria and Korea. However, due to this virus outbreak we had to postpone the reception for the Bulgarian National Day that was on the 3rd of March. We hope to be able to reschedule a reception and go ahead with the plan to hold an exhibition on the Cyrillic alphabet in May-June, entitled 'The Letters of Bulgaria – Alphabet of Europe'. Once the situation is stabilized, we are looking forward to organizing various events and programs in cooperation with the Korean government and institutions. These events aim to provide opportunities to further strengthen and

## [COVID-19 Special] Ambassador Interviews

### H.E. Abida Islam, Ambassador of Bangladesh



#### 1. How are you and your embassy handling the COVID-19 Situation?

The officials of the Embassy of Bangladesh in Seoul so far remain healthy and have been taking various cautionary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among the Embassy officials.

There are over 16,000 Bangladeshi expatriates living in Korea. The Embassy of Bangladesh has been circulating notices on health advisories and different directives of the Bangladesh Government as well as the Government of the

Republic of Korea to them through its website, Facebook, and Twitter accounts, including video messages. The hotline number of the Embassy remains activated around the clock to provide any information and service regarding COVID-19. Apart from that, the Embassy has reduced its working hours as a temporary measure. The Embassy is also updating the relevant authorities from the Korean Government regarding the different travel advisories of the Government of Bangladesh on a daily basis.

#### 2. How much impact has the Coronavirus outbreak had thus far in your home country?

In Bangladesh, 20 cases of COVID-19 infection have been confirmed so far. The infected Bangladeshi nationals had recently arrived from countries like Italy and China. Three patients have recovered and the rest of them are undergoing treatment. There have been two casualties from this virus. Recently, the Government has issued several travel restrictions while traveling to Bangladesh. The visa on arrival has been suspended. A valid visa is mandatory to travel to Bangladesh and all the travelers need to submit a medical/health certificate to this Embassy from within the last 72 hours when applying for a Bangladesh visa and to produce the same document at the entry point in Bangladesh.

#### 3. What are the lessons/views learned from Asia (Public health? Societal? What worked? What did not?)

As far as COVID-19 is concerned, South Korea has been an example of success in its fight against COVID-19. The ROK Government has implemented robust and effective measures to curb the spread of COVID-19. As it appears now, the number of the daily COVID-19 cases has decreased after the sustained escalation of cases a few days ago. In an attempt to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the ROK has taken some effective measures. Korea is a leading country in the world in the early detection and the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 because of its modern and sophisticated medical facilities and robust and accessible national health care system. Furthermore, some other initiatives such as focusing on certain vulnerable groups, the establishment of drive-through testing stations, voluntary social distancing measures, special entry procedures at the airports, a self-diagnosis app, and the constant flow of crucial and clear public information have been instrumental in the recent decrease of infected patients and fatalities.

#### 4. What types of initiatives are you planning to build with Korea when this crisis is over?

Bangladesh has many things to learn from Korea in terms of fighting an epidemic like COVID-19. As Korea is well known for its modern and sophisticated medical facilities and national health care system, we may forge cooperation in the medical sector through the exchange of expertise in medical science and the exchange of technologies. Since Bangladesh is a densely populated country and this kind of the epidemic may turn out to be disastrous for us, we think such cooperation will certainly be helpful for us in tackling any such possible threat that may cause great harm to our people and country.

## [COVID-19 Special] Ambassador Interviews

### H.E. Umar Hadi, Ambassador of Indonesia



#### I. How are you and your embassy handling this situation?

The Embassy of Indonesia had anticipated the Coronavirus outbreak in South Korea quite early. When the outbreak in Wuhan took place, we already calculated the risks to about 37 thousand Indonesian nationals living in South Korea given the geographical proximity, the number of travelers, and the industrial interlinkages between South Korea and Hubei Province in China. Thus, we had started our educational and information outreach to our nationals very early, through social media and telephone hotlines. Our message is simple “keep calm and stay alert”. We also work very closely with various Indonesian community organizations such as student associations, 63 Indonesian mosques, and 19 Indonesian Christian churches, as well as 15 designated community coordinators across South Korea.

We had also quickly established our working relations with the KCDC, whose officials we found very capable, professional, and helpful. They helped us with shaping our educational messages to our community.

As soon as the first COVID-19 patient in South Korea was confirmed on 20 January, 2020, followed by the “Orange alert” on 27 January, 2020, the Embassy established a special task force to focus on assisting our nationals with information, interpretation service, and provisions, should they need them. The task force also started invoking our established contingency plan that included gathering emergency provisions such as face masks, hand sanitizer, and disinfectant spray.

We also started working on improving safety and security measures on our premises that include the Embassy complex and the Indonesian Investment Promotion Center (IIPC), both in Yeouido area, and the Indonesian Trade Promotion Center (ITPC) in Busan. We organized training sessions for our officials and staff members on how to manage emergency situations on our premises. This came to fruition when on Friday, 28 February, 2020, we had to temporarily close down the Embassy and the IIPC offices after receiving information from local authorities about a positive COVID-19 patient in the close vicinity. After reviewing the situation and conducting the sterilization process, we reopened the Embassy and the IIPC offices on Monday, 2 March, 2020.

We have also established temporary working hours and procedural guidelines that include, among others, working from home for the most vulnerable staff members, flexible working hours for staff members commuting via public transport, postponing crowd-gathering events, and cancelling non-essential travel.

When the Korean government announced Daegu city and Cheongdo county as special care zones on 21 February, 2020, followed by the “Red alert” on 23 February, 2020, the Embassy strengthened the special task force focusing on assisting the 1403 Indonesian nationals in Daegu and about 3000 Indonesian nationals in North Gyeongsang Province. Working with local authorities and the Indonesian communities, and using our in-house proprietary big data algorithm, we managed to map each and every Indonesian national residing in the most affected areas of Daegu city.

On 27 February, 2020, the Embassy established a liaison post in a safe zone about 53 km from Daegu’s city center. Working with local authorities, the LO post, staffed by six officials, provided immediate assistance to Indonesian nationals in Daegu and its neighboring regions. For example, during the face mask shortage, we managed to distribute face masks to Indonesian nationals in Daegu, as well as other cities across South Korea. Up to now, we have distributed about 160,000 face masks to our nationals. We have even called our nationals, one by one, in Daegu and North Gyeongsang Province, to check on their wellbeing.



## [COVID-19 Special] Ambassador Interviews

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Our team at the LO post carries out regular visits to factories with Indonesian workers, university campuses with Indonesian students, and small businesses with Indonesian owners; and provide them with necessary information and provisions. We rotate our team once every 14 days. The team that comes home to Seoul must undergo self-quarantine and work from home for 14 days.

In addition, every day, we also dispatch a mobile team to visit our nationals, mostly students, living in Seoul and Gyeonggi Province (where small clusters of cases are found), to check on their wellbeing and provide them with necessary information.

It is important to note that real-time and visual reports from the LO post and the mobile team have helped me significantly in assessing the situation on the ground, formulating the right policies and actions, and reporting to my bosses in Jakarta.

I believe that the Embassy has been able to provide this assistance to Indonesian nationals especially in the Daegu area because of the right policies put into place by the Korean government, especially the no-lockdown and information transparency policies. I admire the capability and steadfastness of the Korean health authorities and professionals. In this regard, the Foreign Minister of Indonesia has sent a letter of support and solidarity to Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha. I have also written letters of sympathy and solidarity to the Mayor of Daegu city and the Governor of North Gyeongsang province. I am confident that Korea will emerge successful from this public health crisis and soon recover from its economic and social impacts.

### **2. How much impact has the Coronavirus outbreak had thus far in your home country?**

Two sides. First, the Indonesian nationals in Korea. Most Indonesians living in South Korea are “E-9” migrant workers. The livelihood of their families in Indonesia are dependent on the wages they earn in South Korea. That is why the success of South Korea in addressing the spread of Coronavirus and helping the economy recover would mean a lot to thousands of families in Indonesia. That is also why the Embassy is doing its best to educate, assist, and protect them so that they can navigate this public health crisis safely.

Second, by the time South Korea starts to see positive results from its rigorous efforts, Indonesia is in the early stages of the public health crisis. The government of Indonesia has put into place policies and measures, learning from the experience of other countries, including South Korea, to mitigate and prevent the spread of Coronavirus. We have established an inter-agency special task force to accelerate containment, tracing, and tracking of suspected cases, and thus mitigate potential non-natural disaster situations. Given the geographical nature of Indonesia’s vast archipelago, the Government has given the authority to provincial and city governments to decide the scale and intensity of their respective responses.

### **3. What are the views/lessons learned from Asia (Public health? Societal? What worked? What didn’t?)**

Perhaps it is too early to fully assess the lessons learned, as it is now a global pandemic crisis. While appreciating the fact that each country may have unique societal backgrounds, I believe there are universal values and principles that will serve the common good, such as information transparency and a scientific-based approach. I also believe that there should be concerted efforts at the global level, learning from past public health crises such as SARS and MERS, and of course COVID-19, to establish a new model of collaboration among countries that includes government, the private sector, academia, civil society, and the media.

I think viruses will continue to mutate. This is the new normal. We humans must adapt. Research, technology, and social solidarity are among the tools that we must continuously improve.

### **4. What types of initiatives are you planning to build with Korea when this crisis is over?**

In the short term, we want to work together in two areas. First, sharing experiences and expertise on addressing the coronavirus public health crisis at both the policy and technical-medical levels. Second, collaborating on the recovery process, both on migrant workers issues and industrial supply chain link-ups. As a matter of priority, we are continuing our work in ensuring that major investment projects from South Korea, such as the construction of Lotte Chemicals’ plant and Hyundai’s factory in Indonesia, are safely and speedily implemented.

## [COVID-19 Special] Ambassador Interviews

### H.E. Federico Failla, Ambassador of Italy



**1. These days it is hard not to talk about COVID-19. How are you and your embassy handling the situation, and how is the situation in your home country? What are the views/lessons learned from Asia and/or Korea in particular (public health? societal? What worked? What didn't?)**

It indeed is a difficult time for Italy and Korea alike, as the pandemic has hit both Europe and Asia, and is now spreading to the rest of the world. It is undeniable that Italy is nowadays particularly affected by this emergency. Having been hit first in Europe, Italy now hopes to be among the first, if not outright the first, to overcome the emergency. It is thus of utmost importance to join forces now in preventing the disease from spreading further and assisting people who have been affected, while countering the misinformation about the disease.

The Italian Embassy in Seoul has been closely monitoring the development of COVID-19 since January. In these crucial times, it has an important task to play in assisting its nationals, constantly cooperating with the host country, and laying the groundwork for the resumption of all activities once the emergency is over. Through its daily comprehensive monitoring of the emergency's development, both in Korea and Italy, the Embassy has provided punctual and up-to-date information to both the Italian and Korean populations. It has also adjusted its working conditions to meet the guidelines

of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs imposed due to the pandemic by especially adapting the rotation of its personnel between being present in the office and remote working, and by providing its staff with the right equipment.

Regarding the situation in Italy at the moment, it is important to stress that it was the first country in Europe to undergo intensive testing and that this policy has helped with finding clusters and isolating them. The continuous effort of the Italian government, along with the choice of declaring the affected regions first and the entire peninsula later as a security zone, allowed the State to protect its population from the very beginning. All Italian citizens are now asked to stay indoors and refrain from going out. Not only schools, museums, and shops have been closed, but even industrial and productive activities have mostly been suspended, and people can now commute only for medical emergencies, basic daily supplies, and unsuspended work when remote working is not feasible.

It is an unprecedented situation in Italy, one that we probably have not seen since the Second World War, but thanks to the resilience of its people, combined with drastic measures and speeding up medical research, Italy will soon re-emerge and become a model to follow in countering this highly infectious disease. It is thus a very important task for the Embassy to counter any misinformation about the disease, such as its effects on a product's safety. The European Food Safety Agency has, for instance, confirmed that COVID-19 cannot be transmitted through food, and that its transmission is from contact among people. Another misconception is about the how lethal the virus is. What is evident in Korea is that the rate of its fatalities is low (1.33% as of today), mainly because of the relatively healthy condition of the affected segments of Korean society (mostly women in their 30s and 40s) and the widespread testing and tracing of the contagion's routes. On the other hand, in Italy the virus has affected mostly men in their 70s and 80s.

The case of Korea has nevertheless provided a useful amount of data and technical know-how on the spread of COVID-19. In particular, the promptness and the scope of the COVID-19 tests and the early development of innovative methods, such as drive-through stations and timely sharing of infection routes on smartphones, have allowed for a rapid response and therefore helped in limiting the number of COVID-19 clusters in Korea. Italy is currently testing its first drive-through stations in major cities, and

## [COVID-19 Special] Ambassador Interviews

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has already developed an application for tracing the routes of infection. Among other lessons learnt, the importance of aggressive testing and screening of infected people's contacts, as well as strict quarantine rules and harsh sanctions could also be mentioned.

### **2. During your diplomatic career, have you ever been in a difficult situation or a global crisis like this before, and how did you address the situation as a diplomat? (not necessarily an epidemic/pandemic but something that was out of your hands, etc.)**

The outbreak of COVID-19 is having consequences never dealt with before in my career. However, as any diplomat, I have had to deal with some emergencies. For instance, after the Tiananmen events in June 1989, the Italian Government decided to organize a special flight for Italian citizens willing to go back to Italy. At that time, I was serving at the Italian Consulate General in Hong Kong and we were asked to take care of that flight. On the 8th of June that year, I flew from Hong Kong to Beijing on a special flight and I was the only passenger, a very peculiar situation. The same day, we brought all the Italians who decided to leave to Hong Kong.

I have still vivid memories of this event, which, however, is not even remotely comparable to the outbreak of COVID-19.

### **3. What type of initiatives were you planning in 2020 before the virus crisis began and how have they been affected?**

The COVID-19 emergency has severely impacted the work of the Embassy as all political, commercial, and cultural events have now been postponed.

First, we had planned political consultations at the Foreign Affairs Vice Ministers' level in March, as a follow-up to the announcement of a strategic partnership between Italy and Korea forged during President Moon's visit to Italy in October 2018. This visit would have included Italian companies wishing to broaden their business relations with their Korean counterparts. Both have unfortunately been postponed.

On the commercial side, the Embassy had planned, together with the Italian Trade Agency in Seoul, an exhibition of Italian Design and the participation of Italian producers to many fairs in Korea, such as the machinery fair, the book fair, Cosmoprof Korea, Bio Korea, and a packaging fair. We had additionally organized special events dedicated to Italian leather producers, who consider Korea as one of their biggest markets, as well as for jewelry and wine. All have likewise been postponed.

As far as culture is concerned, the Embassy had organized, together with the Italian Cultural Institute in Seoul, an Italian Design exhibition, dancing performances dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Federico Fellini's birth, symphonic music concerts, and a book exhibition, just to name a few events planned for the first half of this year.

Moreover, joint events with the United Kingdom on climate change have also been suspended. We will still co-host the COP26 with the United Kingdom this autumn, and will organize Pre-Cop and Youth Cop, as well as events on Africa. Public diplomacy actions on climate awareness, such as the screening of a movie and academic seminars, had been also planned in Korea before the pandemic. We are now looking for the best timing for the resumption of such activities.

Among the most important events ahead this year, there are also the Italian National Day, that falls on the 2nd of June, and the Raffaello Sanzio exhibition on the occasion of 500th anniversary of his death to be held in September-October. We are not able at this point to confirm whether all of them will be held as scheduled, but we are all working hard now in order to make them happen as soon as the COVID-19 emergency is over.

### **4. After we overcome this crisis and people are able to travel again, what would be the best reason for Koreans to visit your country?**

The reasons to visit Italy are still the same ones that have probably drawn over one million Korean tourists to visit Italy last year: the cultural heritage with its timeless art and architecture; the cuisine, appreciated and sought-after all over the world; the breath



## [COVID-19 Special] Ambassador Interviews

But perhaps a reason to visit Italy that has come to light during this difficult period and that not many people are aware of is its tenacity and resilience. There have been plenty of videos of Italians writing music and poems or coming up with new recipes or academic theories while staying at home. Italians never stop, no matter how big the crisis they are facing; every time they get on their feet and rebuild their lives the way they wanted. This is also the reason why Italians have been so creative over the centuries.

So while everyone is waiting to visit our country once again, Italian art, film, literature and music can be enjoyed through the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' media campaign "We Are Italy - Stay Tuned on IT" on the Embassy's social media platforms on Facebook @ItalianEmbassyinKorea, Twitter @ItalyinKorea, and Instagram @italianembassyseoul.

We are now looking forward to soon regaining our position as the first European destination for Korean tourists.

### H.E. Abdulla Saif Al Nuaimi, Ambassador of United Arab Emirates



#### 1. How are you and the UAE Embassy handling this situation?

The Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Seoul has been observing the situation concerning the novel coronavirus in Korea from the early days of its outbreak. The Embassy has positively responded to all the precautionary guidelines and measures introduced by the Republic of Korea's Government and local authorities in their efforts to slow the spread of the virus. The Embassy has adhered to strict health measures to protect employees and visitors. In line with the social distancing protocol, the Embassy acted swiftly to reduce its official working hours as well as allow employees to work remotely from their homes. In the Residence, I have also temporarily suspended a casual weekly gathering in which I host fellow ambassadors, public figures, and groups from around the country.

#### 2. How much impact has the coronavirus outbreak had thus far in your home country?

Like many countries, the UAE is no exception in having confirmed coronavirus cases. The number of positive cases of COVID-19 stands at 198 as of March 24, with two deaths and 41 recovered. The active patients are in stable condition and are receiving all the necessary healthcare services.

The UAE has also enforced strict precautionary health measures and effective monitoring methods on a national level to prevent the local spread of the virus. It has urged the general public to cooperate with health authorities and adhere to the measures announced – especially social distancing – to ensure the overall health and safety of the UAE community.

Furthermore, the UAE has made outstanding humanitarian contributions since the beginning of the outbreak by supporting nations in need. Following the initial COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, the UAE offered continuous support to China, including the provision of medical supplies, such as face masks and gloves. The UAE was one of the first countries to stand by China in this critical period.

In Afghanistan, the UAE dispatched an urgent medical aid shipment containing 20,000 testing units and equipment to examine thousands of people.

In Iran, the UAE sent two aid planes containing 32 metric tons of medical supplies, including boxes filled with thousands of pairs of gloves, surgical masks, and protective equipment.

## [COVID-19 Special] Ambassador Interviews

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The flight was the second humanitarian delivery facilitated by the UAE to Iran recently. On March 3, the UAE carried out a coronavirus aid mission to Iran in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) by dispatching a UAE aircraft carrying 7.5 tons of medical supplies and five WHO experts to help 15,000 healthcare workers.

Moreover, the UAE's humanitarian support for countries experiencing outbreaks of COVID-19 has recently come closer to home.

One of the most notable initiatives championed by the UAE in recent days is the UAE Homeland of Humanity Initiative, wherein the UAE evacuated 215 people of many different nationalities from China's Hubei Province to the Emirates Humanitarian City in Abu Dhabi, where they underwent medical testing and monitoring to ensure their health and safety.

In addition, the UAE has been in active contact and close collaboration with international and regional organizations as well as other nations, including the Republic of Korea, in their efforts fighting the virus.

On March 19, the UAE facilitated the evacuation of 80 individuals living in Iran, among them 74 South Korean nationals, as well as six Iranian family members, in response to a request by the South Korean Government in light of the spread of the novel coronavirus in Iran.

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, held a phone call with South Korean President Moon Jae-in on March 5 to discuss the two countries' special strategic partnership. During the call, His Highness underscored the UAE's readiness to offer all forms of support and assistance in combating COVID-19.

H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, held a phone call with South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha on March 9 to discuss bilateral relations and efforts to curb the spread of the virus.

### **3. What are the views/lessons learned from Asia (Public health? Societal? What worked? What didn't?)**

The response to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus in the Republic of Korea provided us with significant insight. Officially, the government responded immediately with the issuance of measures and guidelines in dealing with the outbreak, including through smart phone applications that highlighted locations that should be avoided. It used a quality public health system and worked rapidly to reach and check potential infected individuals or clusters. It has been very transparent in disclosing updates on the numbers and locations of infections. In addition, the Republic of Korea enforced measures to slow the spread of the virus at the national level. Its efforts included cooperating with international and regional organizations and other nations to curb transmissions. Such collaborations included working with the UAE.

At the societal level, the Korean people have also shown great responsibility in managing the situation. They have strictly followed precautionary health guidelines and measures rolled out by the government. At the same time, they go about their daily lives normally without any unreasonable fear or panic. People's trust in the concerned authorities has greatly contributed to efforts to contain the virus. As one of the countries that witnessed an early outbreak of COVID-19, the Republic of Korea set an example that should be followed by other nations affected by the virus.

### **4. What types of initiatives are you planning to develop with Korea when this crisis is over?**

The United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Korea remain in close cooperation in all areas based on their Special Strategic Partnership. Bilateral cooperation in healthcare is one of these areas. The two countries have maintained a high level of communication in efforts aimed at stopping the spread of the coronavirus. I believe that the concerned authorities on both sides should leverage the current momentum of communication and cooperation to share knowledge and expertise in the health sector as a result of confronting challenges such as the current pandemic.

## [COVID-19 Special] Ambassador Interviews

### H.E. Dinara Kemelova, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic



#### 1. How is the Embassy dealing with the situation around the coronavirus?

The Embassy is directly witnessing the efforts the South Korean government is taking to combat the coronavirus. We see how doctors and relevant South Korean services are selflessly working to prevent the virus from spreading around the country. And nowadays we can see the great progress in South Korea is making while fighting the COVID-19, which could also be considered a best practice.

As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic does not care about nationality and borders. As this has become a global pandemic, close international cooperation is needed to overcome the crisis in connection with COVID-19. This is a serious test for all of humanity.

In this regard, our Embassy, along with other foreign Embassies accredited in the Republic of Korea, is complying with all of the recommendations by the Government of South Korea and local authorities in order to avoid additional infections. Moreover, we are conducting active outreach to the more than 6000 Kyrgyz citizens who temporarily or permanently reside in South Korea. We urge them to pay close attention to their personal hygiene, refrain from visiting crowded places, and observe social distancing. We also recommend that if they show the slightest symptoms of the virus, immediately contact the Embassy or seek help from medical facilities in South Korea.

#### 2. What impact did the coronavirus outbreak have in your country?

Unfortunately, COVID-19 did not bypass our country. On March 19, 2020, three positive cases of infection were identified among Kyrgyz citizens who returned from Saudi Arabia. Kyrgyzstan, like many other countries in the world, is fighting the coronavirus by testing, observing, and strengthening entry controls. In order to ensure the health and safety of our people, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is taking all possible measures.

Being in the center of the Eurasian continent, and needing to stop the spread of the virus in our region, predetermined measures have been taken to temporarily close Kyrgyzstan's borders.

In this regard, mutual understanding between governmental bodies and the public is considered to be very important. Each citizen has a great responsibility and must attach great importance and value his/her health, as well as the health of their family and the entire population of Kyrgyzstan.

We very much hope that very soon the world community, including Kyrgyzstan and South Korea, will overcome this pandemic and return to our normal lives.

#### 3. What views / lessons have been learned from Asia (Public health? What worked? What did not work?)

The unique experience of the Republic of Korea in combating and furthering the non-proliferation of the coronavirus using the latest technologies and advanced diagnostic capabilities is exemplary. Thanks to the coordinated work of government bodies and the population, the Government of South Korea has been able to stop the further spread of the coronavirus throughout the

## [COVID-19 Special] Ambassador Interviews

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At the same time, I express my deep condolences and words of support to the relatives of the deceased whose lives the coronavirus took.

It is noteworthy that, unlike other countries, South Korea did not introduce a ban on the entry of foreign citizens, but introduced a special quarantine procedure using new technologies, such as a mobile application and remote monitoring of the state of people who arrived from abroad.

Particularly noteworthy are the efforts of the Government of the South Korea to minimize the economic consequences of coronavirus. In this regard, the executive and legislative branches of the country were united, especially in allocating an additional budget. As in South Korea, the economy of the Kyrgyz Republic, and in general the social life of the inhabitants, were severely affected. Therefore, we are observing all of the measures taken by the Government of South Korea to combat the pandemic and believe they can serve as a good example for many countries around the world.

We also see the enormous financial resources spent on combating this pandemic and supporting citizens and companies affected by this scourge.

My country, as a developing country, hopes that South Korea, having overcome all the difficulties in combating coronavirus, will be able to share its experience and provide technical assistance in the field of health care in the Kyrgyz Republic, which we need to improve.

#### **4. What initiatives do you plan to build with Korea when this crisis ends?**

Despite the geographical distance, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Korea are united by the historical roots of the peoples of the two countries as well as the common goal of the development of democracy and parliamentarism.

Kyrgyzstan sees South Korea as one of its priority partners in the Asian region. The Kyrgyz side attaches great importance to the continuation of political dialogue between the two countries. In this regard, to overcome the challenges of the coronavirus, we are interested in organizing high-level mutual visits to expand our political cooperation. Our plans also include intensifying trade and economic cooperation, increasing the volume of trade between our countries, and attracting Korean investments in various infrastructure sectors of the Kyrgyz economy. Cultural and humanitarian ties and the promotion of educational projects are important areas of Kyrgyz-Korean cooperation.

Another important area is the development of tourism in the Kyrgyz Republic by increasing the number of tourists from South Korea to Kyrgyzstan. We intend to continue promoting the tourism potential of Kyrgyzstan, which is often called the second Switzerland in Central Asia because of our celestial mountains covered with glaciers. Therefore, we intend to take part in major tourism exhibitions and events held in South Korea.

It is regrettable that some of the meetings and international events that were supposed to take place in South Korea were rescheduled or completely canceled due to the coronavirus outbreak. I hope that the situation will soon be resolved and we will be able to quickly catch up.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to wish to your readers good health, success, prosperity, and stamina, especially in this period when the whole world is fighting the coronavirus together.



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Asia Society Korea

Lotte Hotel Seoul, Suite 615

30 Eulji-ro, Jung-gu

Seoul, Korea 04533, CPO Box 3500

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Fax: 82 2 757 0034

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Ryan Jung Wook Hong  
Hae-Il Jung  
Ha Ra Kang  
Bora Kim  
Dohyeon Kim  
Karoline Jinah Kim  
Mi-Young Kim  
Je-Wook Lee  
Wooil Lee  
Youngro Lee  
Jay Jeong-Hoon Song  
Mark Tetto  
Ilyoung Yoon  
Sangwon Yoon

## KOREA CENTER MEMBERS

### GLOBAL CORPORATE LEADERS (75,000 USD or more)

Citi Group  
Hyosung Group  
Samjong KPMG

### CORPORATE PARTNERS (25,000,000 KRW)

BNK Busan Bank  
Daehong Communications  
Hotel Lotte  
Lotte Chemical Corp.  
Lotte Hotel  
Pwc SAMIL

### CORPORATE CONTRIBUTORS (10,000,000 KRW)

BAE, KIM & LEE LLC  
Bloomberg  
EY Han Young  
Hana Financial Investment Co., Ltd.  
HDC Group  
KIM & CHANG  
Korea Investment & Securities Co., Ltd.  
Korean Air  
Lee & Ko  
MIGHT & MAIN  
Mirae Asset Daewoo  
Poongsan  
SHIN & KIM  
Yulchon LLC

### CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE (5,000,000 KRW)

Haelyung Hwang  
Mark Tetto  
Young Joon Kim

### SPECIAL CONTRIBUTORS

Lotte Duty Free