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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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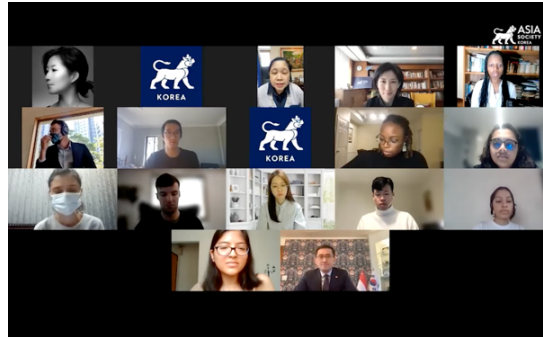
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Asia Society Korea Center

ASK-Y Sessions

Session 2: Why Are We Not Equal? The New Disruptors: Gender and Equality



ASK-Y Cohort and H.E. Maria Theresa B. Dizon- De Vega, H.E. Eric Teo, Symone Gosby

October 25, 2021 — Following our [introductory session](#), "Re-thinking Sustainability and Youth in the COVID Era," Asia Society Korea held our second session of the Asia Society Korea Youth ([ASK-Y](#)) panel discussion on gender and equality. The biweekly discussion titled, "**Why Are We Not Equal? New Disruptors: Gender and Equality**," probed the dual challenges of enhancing equality and countering discrimination across the socio-economic and gender domains. The discussion contributed to the broader public discourse on the inequalities-sustainability nexus by examining the consequences of unrectified disparities and discrimination in our everyday livelihood.

The ASK-Y panel discussion was hosted by Asia Society Korea Executive Director **Yvonne Kim**, inviting H.E. **Maria Theresa B. Dizon-De Vega**, Philippine Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, H.E. **Eric Teo Boon Hee**, Singaporean Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, and **Symone Gosby**, Coordinator of Generation Equality Engagement at the United Nations Foundation. The guest speakers were joined by our finest and brightest [ASK-Y cohorts](#), selected to the program from eight countries around the central theme of sustainability and youth — expected to mark the start of a strong tradition of public diplomacy and transnational youth networks (TYNs).

About the Guest Speakers



Ambassador Theresa B. Dizon-De Vega is a career diplomat with over 25 years of experience serving in different parts of the world has roots in Porac, Pampanga, Capas, Tarlac, and Bangued, Abra. She joined the Department of Foreign Affairs after placing 1st in the Foreign Service Officers Examination in 1994. She has since served in various offices in the DFA as well as foreign postings in Mexico (as Third and then Second Secretary and Consul), Hong Kong SAR, China (Consul), the United Kingdom (Minister and Consul General) and New York (Deputy Consul General and Manager, Philippine Center New York), USA. She most recently served as the Philippine Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany.



Ambassador Eric Teo has been the Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore to the Republic of Korea (ROK) since August 2019. Mr. Teo was the Director-General of the Northeast Asia Directorate in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Singapore, from 2014 to 2019. In this position, he was involved in the organisation of (i) the historic summit meeting between US President Donald Trump and DPRK State Affairs Commission Chairman Kim Jong Un in Singapore in June 2018 and (ii) the historic cross-strait meeting between Mr Xi Jinping and Mr Ma Ying-jeou in Singapore in November 2015. Mr. Teo was Deputy Head of Mission in the Singapore Embassy in Beijing from 2011 to 2014. From 2007 to 2010, Mr. Teo served as Deputy Trade Representative in the Singapore Trade Office in Taipei.

From 1999 to 2002, he served as First Secretary (Political) in the Singapore Embassy in Tokyo.

Mr. Teo joined the Singapore Foreign Service in 1996 and has held several appointments in MFA's ASEAN Directorate and Northeast Asia Directorate.



Symone Gosby is the Coordinator for Generation Equality Engagement at the UN Foundation and a budding advocacy communication specialist. She is passionate about using the power of communication and her bilingual (Korean and English) skills to spread awareness and action around social justice and human rights.

Before assuming her current role, Symone worked as a Program Coordinator on the Human Rights team at Vital Voices Global Partnership, where she provided regional knowledge about Asia for a multitude of programs. Prior to joining Vital Voices, Symone lived, worked, and studied in Seoul, South Korea.

Session 3: Why is the Earth Sick? *The New Disruptors: Climate and Environment*



Guest Speaker Kate Clayton

November 8, 2021 — Following our second session, "[Why Are We Not Equal? | The New Disruptors: Gender and Equality](#)," Asia Society Korea hosted the third session of the Asia Society Korea Youth ([ASK-Y](#)) program on climate and equality. The session was hosted by Asia Society Korea Executive Director **Yvonne Kim**, with **Kate Clayton**, Research Officer at La Trobe Asia, and **Alistair Ritchie**, Director of Asia-Pacific Sustainability at Asia Society Policy Institute (ASPI), as guest speakers.

Moderated by **Mark Hopkins**, Master of International Studies Candidate at Seoul National University GSIS, and **Nazifa Rafa**, MPhil Candidate in Environmental Policy at the University of Cambridge, the discussion session was titled "**Why is the Earth Sick? | The New Disruptors: Climate and Environment**" as the panel probed the latest state of our global habitat and its stark warnings that humanity's future could be filled with risk profiles.

But as the speakers all agreed, this future is not set in stone. Our concerted efforts to mitigate climate change could reverse trends, accelerate technological progress, and create geopolitical developments that drastically reduce our footprint. The world at the end of the 21st century could turn out to be radically different. Watch our ASK-Y webinar to find out more about the environment-sustainability nexus — why the climate is changing, and how we can prepare for the future — from the perspectives of young leaders and seasoned experts.

About the Guest Speakers



Kate Clayton is a Research Officer at [La Trobe Asia](#) and Chief Operations Officer at [Young Australians in International Affairs](#). An international relations academic, her research areas include Australia, China, the Pacific Islands and the United States. Her focus is on security, geopolitics, international relations theory, climate change, gender and sexuality. Kate's work has been published in *The Conversation*, *Crikey*, *Lowy Institute Interpreter*, *China Story Blog*, *9Dash Line*, *ABC News* and *Junkee*. She holds a Master of International Relations (International Security) from the University of Melbourne, Bachelor of International Relations (Asian Studies) from La Trobe University and has studied at Chongqing University in China. Watch her recent appearance in Asia Society Australia's global youth program titled "[Gen A | The Crucial COP: Climate Change, Youth and our Region](#)."



Alistair Ritchie is Director of Asia-Pacific Sustainability at the [Asia Society Policy Institute](#) (ASPI), where he leads and oversees activities on Asian carbon market development and ASPI's overall sustainability portfolio. Alistair is an international expert in greenhouse gas emissions trading systems (ETSs), and a known leader in their development - including as leader of the European Commission project to support the Korean government's implementation and upgrade of their emissions trading system (the first national ETS in East Asia). He was also the technical lead for the European Commission project to support the development of China's national ETS. In Europe, Alistair played a key role in improving the EU ETS through managing and directing several projects to support Phase 3 and 4 policy design and implementation. He has over 25 years of experience in various areas of climate change, energy, and air pollution control strategy and policy. Aside from his projects in Europe, China, and Korea, he has worked in Taiwan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and the U.S.

Session 4: Why Can't We Understand Each Other? The New Disruptors: Culture and Media



ASK-Y Participant Dylan Goh

November 22, 2021 — Following our previous session, "[Why is the Earth Sick? | The New Disruptors: Climate and Environment](#)," Asia Society Korea held the the fourth session of our Asia Society Korea Youth ([ASK-Y](#)) program on culture, entertainment, and media. The session was hosted by Asia Society Korea Executive Director **Yvonne Kim**, with **Bernie Cho**, President of DFSB Kollektive, **Dr. Amareswar Galla**, UNESCO Chair on Inclusive Museums and Sustainable Heritage Development at Anant University, and **Shinwha Hong**, Researcher at the Center for Intangible Culture Studies (CICS), as guest speakers.

Moderated by **Dylan Goh**, a Bachelor of Commerce / Design at the University of New South Wales, and **Claudine Ukubereyimfura**, MA Candidate in China Studies at Beijing University, the discussion session was titled "Why Can't We Understand Each Other? | The New Disruptors: Culture and Media" as the panel probed culture as a moderating lens for relating to society and the world, and our behavior as individuals and nation-states.

Through the lived experiences of global emerging leaders and industry experts across the cultural heritage and the entertainment domains, the ASK-Y panel explores everything from the cultural success of BTS to the universality of ancestor worship to the power of intangible cultural heritage, spotlighting the unique role of youth as bridge builders for cultural exchanges and the importance of deep cultural empathy in cultivating global citizens.

About the Guest Speakers



Bernie Cho is the President of DFSB Kollektive, a Seoul-based Artist & Label Services agency that specializes in providing digital media, marketing, and distribution solutions to 600+ Korean Pop music artists. As more K-Pop acts aspire to go independent and international, DFSB Kollektive collaborates with artists and their management companies to devise customized strategies that directly connect them to their local and global fans. Watch his appearance in Asia Society Korea's special webcast titled "[BTS and Beyond](#)."



Prof. Amareswar Galla is an alumnus of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi with PhD from the Australian National University, Canberra, Dr. Amareswar Galla is currently Professor of Inclusive Cultural Leadership and Founding Director of the International Centre for Inclusive Cultural Leadership (ICICL); and Dean of Faculty Development and Leadership, Anant National University, Ahmedabad, India. He is the Founding Executive Director of the International Institute for the Inclusive Museum, Australia/India/USA and Emeritus Faculty, Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.



Shinwha Hong is a researcher at the CICS and an International Manager of NSiGlobal Secretariat of the Jeonju International Awards for Intangible Cultural Heritage. He studied at the University of Massachusetts Boston as an English major and started his current position of international affairs manager at CICS in 2018. Since then, Shinwha has been involved in a series of international projects involving cultural heritage, more specifically Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). He is the International Manager of the Jeonju ICH Awards, which is the only award in the world that recognizes international ICH safeguarding activities.

Session 5: Why Does Education (Still) Matter? The New Disruptors: Basic and Higher Education



Guest Speaker H.E. Sripriya Ranganathan

December 6, 2021 — Following our previous session, "[Why Can't We Understand Each Other? | The New Disruptors: Culture and Media](#)," Asia Society Korea held the fifth session of our [Asia Society Korea Youth](#) (ASK-Y) program on education and sustainability. Does education still matter? Some think providing the right information and learning can not only change people's values and behaviors but also encourage them to adopt more sustainable lifestyles. The transformative power of education lies in its ability to lift people out of the cycles of poverty, malnutrition, and disease that impact countless communities worldwide.

Asia Society Korea Executive Director **Yvonne Kim** invited **H.E. Nguyen Vu Tung**, Ambassador of Viet Nam to the Republic of Korea, **H.E. Sripriya Ranganathan**, Ambassador of India to the Republic of Korea, and **Faye Sahai**, Managing Director at Vinaj Ventures, to discuss why education may still be the answer to some of the most pressing challenges of our times — and how we may improve the system where it's failing our students. Moderated by **Hwa Pyung Yoo**, co-founder of Enspire, **Jasmine Park**, MA student at Seoul National University, and **Gabriela Mayte Souza Pinedo**, BA candidate in Informatics at Yuan Ze University, the panel discussion touched upon a range of questions including but not limited to the role of education, the gap between traditional institutions of learning and the skills demanded in the job force, spillover effects of COVID on education, and what role technology can play to move us.

About the Guest Speakers



Ambassador Nguyen Vu Tung, a career diplomat, assumed his role as the eighth Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the Republic of Korea in August 2020. Prior to this position, Ambassador Nguyen was the President of the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam (DAV) since September 2016 where he served as Vice President of the academy the year before. Previously, Ambassador Nguyen served in various positions including Director General of Institute for East Sea (South China Sea) Studies; Director General of Institute for Strategic and Foreign Policy Studies from March 2014 to July 2020; Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Vietnam in the United States of America from July 2010 to January 2014.

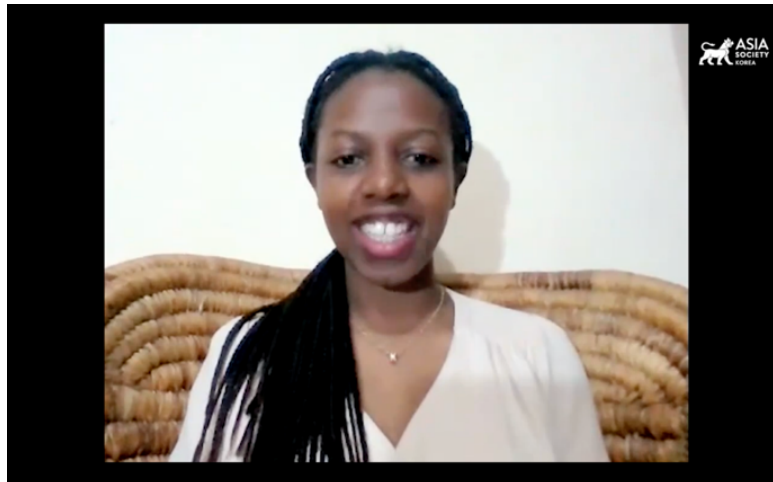


Ambassador Sripriya Ranganathan is a career diplomat who joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1994, immediately after obtaining her Masters' Degree in History, with a specialization in Modern Indian History, from Delhi University. During her career, Ambassador Ranganathan has held a variety of positions in New Delhi and abroad. She served in Myanmar as the second in command at the Embassy of India, Yangon. Her other overseas postings were in Ankara and Hong Kong. During her multiple years' experience in headquarters, she has served in various capacities in the Ministry of External Affairs as well as in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. She served as Joint Secretary (Director General) responsible for relations with Bangladesh and Myanmar. She has also headed the SAARC Division and the Policy Planning Divisions in the Ministry. Earlier, she served as Director in the Disarmament & International Security Affairs Divisions and as Under Secretary in the Administration and Europe West Divisions. In the course of her secondment to the Department of Commerce, she served in the Export Promotion (Agricultural Products) & the Trade Policy Divisions.



Faye Sahai is currently Managing Director at Vinaj Ventures, investing in digital wellness and behavioral health startups for young people with the [telosity.co](#) Fund and advising corporations on innovation. Prior, she has 25+ year experience in healthcare, financial institutions, and insurance innovation and investment executive at Kaiser Permanente, Schwab, AIG, Blue Shield and Deloitte Consulting and founded three of her own startups. She has served an Advisor and Board member to over a dozen companies including UCSF Catalyst, ANA Innovation Advisory, Samsung Emerging Technology Advisory, Innovation Executive Forum, Summer Search, Autonomous ID, and Ascend Leadership NorCal Chair.

Session 6: Why Can't We Get Along? The New Disruptors: Politics and Security



ASK-Y Participant Claudine Ukubereyimfura

December 20, 2021 — Following our previous session, "[Why Does Education \(Still\) Matter? | The New Disruptors: Basic and Higher Education](#)," Asia Society Korea held the sixth and last session of our [Asia Society Korea Youth \(ASK-Y\)](#) program on politics, security, and global sustainability.

The last of our discussions began with the question, "Why Can't We Get Along?" as we explored the ongoing rivalry between Beijing and Washington and think about how the rest of the world should respond. Moderated by Asia Society Korea Executive Director **Yvonne Kim**, Dr. **John Delury**, Professor of Chinese Studies at Yonsei University GSIS, and H.E. **Akiva J. Tor**, Ambassador of Israel to the Republic of Korea, sat down to discuss a range of questions including but not limited to the role of middle powers, China's position on Taiwan, how we ought to understand and engage with Beijing, and the implications our answers have for the world in "[navigating shared futures](#)."

About the Guest Speakers



John Delury is Professor of Chinese Studies at Yonsei University Graduate School of International Studies (GSIS), where he serves as chair of the Program in International Cooperation. He is also chair of the undergraduate Program in International Studies at Yonsei's Underwood International College (UIC), and founding director of the Yonsei Center on Oceania Studies. He is the author, with Orville Schell, of *Wealth and Power: China's Long March to the Twenty-first Century*, and is writing a book about US-China relations in the early Cold War. Based in Seoul since 2010, his articles can be found in journals such as *Asian Survey*, *Late Imperial China*, and *Journal of Asian Studies*, his commentaries appear in *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *38*

North, and he contributes book reviews for the quarterly journal *Global Asia*, where he is associate managing editor. John is a member of the Council of Foreign Relations, National Committee on US-China Relations, and National Committee on North Korea; he is also Pacific Century Institute board member, Asia Society senior fellow, National Committee on American Foreign Policy leadership council member, and Center on Strategic and International Studies adjunct fellow. He is a member of the Republic of Ireland's foreign affairs advisory network and is invited to offer his analysis on East Asian affairs with government, think tank, corporate, and civil society organizations globally. Professor Delury received his Ph.D. in History from Yale University.



H.E. Akiva J. Tor was appointed as the Ambassador of Israel to the Republic of Korea in November 2020. Prior to his appointment to Korea, he started his career as Director at Israel Economic and Cultural Office in Taipei in 1996. After joining Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he served as Deputy-Spokesman (1998 – 2000); and Deputy Director of the Department for Palestinian Affairs (2000 – 2002). He also served as World Jewish Affairs Adviser to the President of Israel for about three years since 2003; Israel Consul General in San Francisco and Pacific Northwest (2008 – 2012); and Head of Bureau for World Jewish Affairs and World Religions in MFA (2013 – 2020). H.E. Tor received his BA in Analytical Philosophy from Columbia University (1981-1985), then pursued his

graduate studies and received his MA in Political Science and Contemporary Jewish Thought, and an MPA from Harvard Kennedy School (2002-2003) with the support of Wexner and Goldman Fellowships, respectively. Amb. Tor served as a paratrooper in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) (1985-1987) and was honorably discharged as an infantry captain. His most recent published works include *Building a Bridge Over Troubled Waters: A Jewish Peace Corps* (2015), and *The Jewish Blindness* (2011).

Monthly Lecture Series & Webinars

[SEPTEMBER] Now More Than Ever: Shoring Up Afghanistan's Humanitarian Assistance



Guest Speaker H.E. Oh Joon

September 30, 2021— Since the U.S. withdrawal from Kabul, the situation in Afghanistan has drawn the attention of the world on the evacuations and domestic political fallout. Slowly but surely, the focus is now shifting to a much deeper, multifaceted humanitarian crisis across the region. The UN Security Council adopted a [resolution](#) on August 30 calling for "enhanced" humanitarian assistance. As a part of Asia Society's ongoing women empowerment initiative, Asia Society Korea and [Asia Society Southern California](#) invited H.E. Shinkai Zahine Karokhail, former MP and Afghan Ambassador to Canada, and H.E. Oh Joon, Chair of the [Save the Children Korea](#) Board to discuss the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan in a jointly hosted webinar.

Against the backdrop of this emergency, the panel discussed a range of issues from what we know about the situation in Afghanistan to how we can reduce the human cost of the ongoing crisis — with a focus on women and children.

About the Guest Speakers



Shinkai Zahine Karokhail is an Afghan politician and rights activist, focusing mainly on the political representation of women and the protection of vulnerable children. She was the Afghan ambassador to Canada. H.E. Karokhail was elected Wolesi Jirga as an MP in 2005 to represent the people of Kabul in the National Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. She was re-elected in the 2010 parliamentary elections. Currently, she is a member of the Parliamentary Women Caucus Committee and serves on the Budget and Finance Committee. H.E. Karokhail is a vocal advocate of women's rights, working tirelessly on conflict prevention programs. In 1991, she among other members founded the Afghan Women's Educational Center, initially taking its teaching responsibilities followed by various other posts during the later years. In 2002, she became the director of the NGO heading its developmental and management programs. She played a pivotal role in opposing the controversial draft Shia Family Law, which was seen to be oppressing Shiite women and depriving them of many of their rights in a marital relationship. After making international headlines, a number of amendments were made to the draft law in order to make it more acceptable. She was also one of the few voices behind the Elimination of Violence Against Women Bill which was approved by the President of Afghanistan in 2009. She was the only parliamentarian alongside other female leaders from various departments to be invited to witness the signing of the bill by President Hamid Karzai.



Joon Oh is a professor of United Nations studies at Kyung Hee University in Seoul, Korea. He is also the chair of Save the Children Korea and a board member of Save the Children International. Previously he was Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations in New York from 2013 to 2016. During that time, he also served as the 71st president of the Economic and Social Council and as president of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2015 and 2016. Before that, he was the Korean ambassador to Singapore (2010–13) and deputy minister for multilateral and global affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Seoul (2008–10). The Korean government twice awarded him the Order of Service Merit, in 1996 and 2006. In 2018, Oh received a Global Korea Award from Michigan State University. Rehabilitation International gave him a Global Presidential Award in 2016 in acknowledgment of his achievements as president of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He also received the 2014 Youngsan Diplomat of the Year award for his work on North Korean human rights issues. He published his first book in Korean, *For Mica, Who Contemplates Life*, in 2015. He received a master's degree in international policy studies from Stanford University in 1991. *Read more about H.E. Oh Joon's work with Save the Children [here](#).*

[NOVEMBER] War on Terror: Reflecting on the 2007 South Korea-Taliban Hostage Crisis



Guest speakers Dr. Randall Jones (top left), Dr. Mason Richey (top right), Dr. David Tizzard

November 4, 2021 — Asia Society Korea brought together three renowned experts — **Dr. Duyeon Kim**, Adjunct Senior Fellow at the Center for New American Security, **Dr. Randall Jones**, a non-resident fellow at the Korea Economic Institute, and **Dr. David Tizzard**, assistant professor at Seoul Women's University — to discuss the current and future development of politics, security, and economics on the Korean Peninsula. The discussion was moderated by **Dr. Mason Richey**, Asia Society Korea Senior Contributor and Professor of Hankuk University of Foreign Studies. This conversation, based on their research presented in the recently edited volume *The Future of the Korean Peninsula: 2032 and Beyond*, offered an enlightening take on inter-Korean relations and the place of the Korean Peninsula in East Asia.

About the Guest Speakers



asymmetric capabilities [here](#).

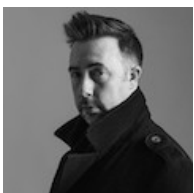
Dr. Mason Richey Mason Richey is a senior contributing writer to Asia Society Korea and an associate professor of international politics at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (Seoul, South Korea). Dr. Richey has also held positions as a POSCO Visiting Research Fellow at the East-West Center (Honolulu, HI) and a DAAD Scholar at the University of Potsdam. His research focuses on U.S. and European foreign and security policy as applied to the Asia-Pacific. Recent scholarly articles have appeared (inter alia) in *Pacific Review*, *Asian Security*, *Global Governance*, and *Foreign Policy Analysis*. Shorter analyses and opinion pieces have been published in *War on the Rocks*, *Le Monde*, the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, and *Forbes*, among other venues. Watch his recent appearance at our webinar on North Korean



Dr. Duyeon Kim is an adjunct senior fellow with the Indo-Pacific Security Program at the Center for a New American Security and columnist for the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. She specializes in both regional and functional issues: the two Koreas, nuclear nonproliferation, East Asian relations, security, and negotiations. She has written in leading publications including *Foreign Affairs* and *Foreign Policy*. Kim is a frequent commentator on CNN and BBC among other networks, and quoted widely in global media including *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, *Bloomberg*, *The Guardian*, *Yonhap News*, and *The Japan Times*. Previously, she was senior advisor for Northeast Asia and Nuclear Policy at the International Crisis Group; associate in the nuclear policy and Asia programs at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; and senior fellow and deputy director of non-proliferation at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.



Dr. Randall Jones Dr. Jones received the Decoration of the Order of the Rising Sun from the Government of Japan and the Sungnye Medal of the Order of Diplomatic Service Merit from the Government of Korea in 2018. Currently, Dr. Jones is a professional fellow at Columbia University's Center on Japanese Economy and Business and a non-resident fellow at the Korea Economic Institute. Previously, he was a visiting scholar at Columbia University in 2019-20. Dr. Jones served as the Senior Counsellor for East Asia and as Head of the Japan/Korea Desk at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris from 2002 until 2019. During his 30 years at the OECD, Dr. Jones wrote all 16 OECD Economic Surveys of Korea and 15 OECD Economic Surveys of Japan, in addition to a number of other publications. Read more of his work for the Peninsula Blog [here](#).



Dr. David Tizzard David Tizzard has a PhD in Korean Studies. He lectures at Seoul Women's University and Hanyang University on contemporary Korean issues. He is co-editor of the volume *The Future of the Korean Peninsula: Korea 2032 and Beyond*. David also writes a weekly column in the Korea Times and is the host of the podcast Korea Deconstructed. Read more of Dr. Tizzard's weekly columns [here](#).

Ambassador Series

Interview with H.E. Sami M. Alsadhan Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the Republic of Korea



H.E. Sami M. Alsadhan, Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the Republic of Korea

September 24, 2021 — As a part of our Ambassador Interview webzine, Asia Society Korea interviewed **H.E. Sami M. Alsadhan**, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Republic of Korea.

Q. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia celebrates its National Day on September 23rd, commemorating the founding of the modern Saudi nation. Has National Day been celebrated differently since the start of COVID-19?

H.E.: Every year, we usually celebrate this day with pride, deep gratitude, and dignity. We need to appreciate the efforts and sacrifices made by our ancestors in building, developing, and serving the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has led to the cancellation of National Day celebrations in the Kingdom and most overseas Saudi diplomatic missions.

Q. Many Koreans would highlight the 1970s and 80s as the most dynamic period in Saudi-ROK relations. Back then, Riyadh enjoyed an economic boom due to surging oil prices, and Korean construction companies were involved in massive Saudi building projects. What would you say is the most significant moment, or milestone, in Saudi-ROK bilateral relations?

H.E.: We are certainly proud of the long, historic alliance between Saudi Arabia and South Korea. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1962, both countries have economically prospered from the partnership. The 1970s and 80s were beneficial to both nations as Korean companies entered the Saudi market and were involved in mega-construction projects. However, since then, Saudi-Korea ties have also developed dramatically in other fields such as politics, military, education, culture, intellectual property, information technology, and health.

Q. In 2019, Saudi Arabia and Korea strengthened their bilateral cooperation and strategic partnerships. South Korea pledged to provide full support to Saudi Arabia's efforts in diversifying its economic portfolio, breaking away from a dependence on the energy segment — a project known as Vision 2030. The pledge received media spotlight as the two countries agreed to a string of billion-dollar deals in energy, infrastructure, healthcare, and capacity-building sectors. What can you tell us about this partnership, and how does Vision 2030 go beyond traditional oil collaborations?

H.E.: A memorandum of cooperation on the Joint Vision (Saudi-Korean Vision 2030) was signed in October 2017. The Vision focused on strengthening the flow of foreign direct investment and bolstering trade ties between both countries. In the run-up to the conclusion of the Joint Vision, the Saudi-Korean Vision 2030 Committee was established. The committee acts as a platform to monitor progress, approve Vision projects, and troubleshoot bottlenecks. The committee convenes annually on an alternating basis between the two countries.

The first meeting of the Saudi-Korean Committee took place in Seoul in October 2017, with 40 projects and initiatives selected as part of the Saudi-Korean Vision 2030. The projects were categorized into five sub-groups: 1, Energy and Manufacturing; 2, Smart

Infrastructure and Digitization; 3, Capacity Building; 4, Healthcare and Life Sciences; and 5, Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and Investment.

Q. At the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit in January this year, the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs commented on the exemplary leadership of Saudi Arabia in helping to ensure peace and stability in Yemen. What is Saudi Arabia's perspective on ROK-DPRK bilateral relations?

H.E.: Saudi Arabia's foreign policy aims to ensure stability and prosperity on the Korean Peninsula. We support the government of the Republic of Korea in all decisions that contribute to bringing peace to the region.

Q. Every country has its culinary traditions. To those unfamiliar with Saudi Arabian food culture, camel is a Middle Eastern dish that will surely interest our audience. Besides the well-known fact that camel meat is eaten at important events and during Ramadan, what else can you tell us about Saudi cuisine and its food culture?

H.E.: Camel meat has long been a popular main course for special occasions on the Arabian Peninsula as it is known for its nutrition values and low-fat content. In addition to camel meat, Saudi cuisine has a wide variety of dishes, with each region having specific meals prepared using different ingredients.

Q. In October 2019, K-pop band BTS became the first foreign artist to play a solo stadium show in Saudi Arabia. Video footage from the concert showed thousands of Saudi fans singing along to the music, lighting up the stadium with lanterns and mobile phones. With Riyadh increasingly loosening restrictions on entertainment, what kind of new cultural cooperation do you expect moving forward?

H.E.: As you mentioned, BTS was the first foreign band to perform a solo stadium show in Saudi Arabia. This concert highlights the importance of cultural bonds in enhancing the relationship between countries. I hope we can cooperate further in the cultural sector by exchanging experts and specialists in culture and literature, hosting cultural forums, and promoting travel through tourist and heritage sites.

Q. In Saudi Arabia, Korean language courses can be taken in universities such as Prince Sultan University or King Saud University. Conversely, the Korea Herald reported in 2017 that 7 out of 10 students sitting a second foreign language test for the Suneung exam in Korea (KSAT) chose Arabic. That means almost 52,000 students sat an Arabic exam that year. Given such conditions, how might Riyadh and Seoul strengthen people-to-people exchanges, especially among younger people?

H.E.: I highly recommend educational institutions in Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Korea adopt student exchange programs. It is essential to focus on merging and converging cultures. Notably, many Saudi and Korean youth can learn the other's language and understand each other through interaction. If you look at social media platforms, you will be surprised to find many Saudi Arabians love learning Hangeul and are big fans of K-pop and K-drama, and vice versa.

About H.E. Sami M. Alsadhan, Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the Republic of Korea



Ambassador Alsadhan joined the Western State Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Headquarters in 1991. He has served in various offices including as Deputy Consul of the Saudi Consulate in the United States (1998-2001), Head of Economic and Political Department at the Saudi Embassy in Rome, Italy (2005-2010), Deputy Chief of Mission at the Saudi Embassy in Washington D.C. (2010-2020) and joined the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Seoul, Korea in June 2021. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Economics with Honors from the King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (1982-1986) and a Diploma on Diplomatic Studies from the Institute of Prince Saud Alfaisal for Diplomatic Studies in Riyadh (1993-1995). In between his studies, he worked as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in Economics at King Saudi University (1986-1988).



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Interview with H.E. Erdenetuya Namsrai Mongolian Ambassador to the Republic of Korea



Interview with H.E. Erdenetuya Namsrai, Mongolian Ambassador to the Republic of Korea

September 27, 2021 — Asia Society Korea invited **H.E. Erdenetuya Namsrai**, the Mongolian Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, to examine the most salient of issues impacting South Korea and Mongolia. A career diplomat with a strong background in the Korean Peninsula, she sat down with Asia Society Korea Executive Director **Yvonne Kim** to discuss everything from cultural similarity of the two nations to Mongolia-ROK cooperation in the context of Northeast Asian peace and prosperity.



H.E. Erdenetuya Namsrai speaks at the New Ambassadors Welcome Dinner on May 31, 2021. She was one of the seven new heads of mission introduced that evening at Asia Society Korea's dinner event held in the Lotte Hotel Seoul.

About H.E. Erdenetuya Namsrai, Mongolian Ambassador to the Republic of Korea



Ambassador Erdenetuya Namsrai began her diplomatic career at the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Mongolia in 1993 as a Korea Desk Officer at the Department of Multilateral Cooperation. In 1996 she served as Korean Desk Officer in the Department of International Trade and Development Cooperation.

In 1999, she was promoted to Third Secretary and was assigned to the Attaché position at the Embassy of Mongolia to the Republic of Korea. Later she served as the Korean Desk Officer at the Department of Asia and North America in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia. In 2007, she was promoted to Second Secretary at the Embassy of Mongolia to the Republic of Korea and then to First Secretary in 2010. In 2012, she assumed the role of Counsellor of Political Affairs at the embassy and in 2015 the position of Director of Northeast Asian Cooperation Division at the Department of Multilateral Cooperation where she started her diplomatic career. After serving as Minister-

Counsellor and Charge d'Affaires at the embassy in South Korea she became the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Mongolia to the Republic of Korea in February 2021.

The Ambassador graduated from Kim Il Sung University in Pyongyang, North Korea in 1993 and received her Master of Arts in Korean Studies from the University of Humanities, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in 2007. She is fluent in Korean and English. *Read more about the Embassy of Mongolia [here](#).*

Interview with H.E. Maria Theresa B. Dizon-De Vega Philippine Ambassador to the Republic of Korea



H.E. Maria Theresa B. Dizon-De Vega, Philippine Ambassador to the Republic of Korea

November 12, 2021 — Asia Society Korea continues its [Ambassador Series](#) with **H.E. Maria Theresa B. Dizon-De Vega**, Philippine Ambassador to the Republic of Korea. Sharing her insights for bilateral relations between South Korea and the Philippines, she sat down with Asia Society Korea Executive Director **Yvonne Kim** in an interview that covered a wide range of issues including defense, economy, media, culture, and sports.

About H.E. Maria Theresa B. Dizon-De Vega, Philippine Ambassador to the Republic of Korea



Ambassador Dizon-De Vega is a career diplomat with over 25 years of experience serving in different parts of the world with roots in Porac, Pampanga, Capas, Tarlac, and Bangued, Abra. She joined the Department of Foreign Affairs after placing 1st in the Foreign Service Officers Examination in 1994. She has since served in various offices in the DFA as well as foreign postings in Mexico (as Third and then Second Secretary and Consul), Hong Kong SAR, China (Consul), the United Kingdom (Minister and Consul General) and New York (Deputy Consul General and Manager, Philippine Center New York), USA. She most recently served as the Philippine Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany.

She was DFA Chief Coordinator, Office of the Secretary from 2013-2016, Special Assistant-Office of the Secretary from 2005-2008 and served in various capacities in the Office of the Undersecretary for Administration, Office of the Undersecretary for Policy Department, Legislative Liaison Unit, and Office of American Affairs.

She completed her primary and secondary education at Holy Spirit School and School of the Holy Spirit, respectively. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in English (Cum Laude) at the University of the Philippines, Diliman. She joined the UP Diliman Campus Faculty immediately after graduation in 1989, teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses at the College of Arts and Letters. She received her master's degree in English from Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada in 1991.

She likewise obtained her Juris Doctor Degree (JD) from the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law and passed the Philippine Bar in 2000. She has a Graduate Diploma in China Business Law (with Distinction) from the University of Hong Kong. She was a fellow of the Centre of Asian Studies of the University of Hong Kong in 2008 and published a study on "Harnessing Remittances for Development: the Philippines and Indonesia."



Philippine Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, H.E. Maria Theresa B. Dizon-De Vega, left, and President of Korea, Moon Jae-in, right, in the Blue House on 15 October 2021. (Photo Credit: Blue House, ROK)

Interview with H.E. Michael Reiterer Former European Union Ambassador to the Republic of Korea



H.E. Michael Reiterer, Former Ambassador of the EU to the Republic of Korea

December 17, 2021 — As a part of our Ambassador Interview webzine, Asia Society Korea Center is pleased to catch up with the Former Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Korea, **H.E. Michael Reiterer**. After a little over a year of retirement from his public official position, he updates us on what new interests he has developed, as well as what he has missed since leaving Seoul. With extensive diplomatic and policy experience, he gives insight into the future of relations between the EU and ROK in the economy, security, and bilateral relations. As an insider of academia through his role as the editor of the Brussels School of Governance Centre for Security, Diplomacy, and Strategy's Policy Brief Series, he shares academics' current interests and discussions.

Q. It has been a year since you retired from the European Diplomatic Service as Ambassador of the EU to the Republic of Korea. While many people take a break after retirement, you have kept busy. What have you been involved in since you left South Korea?

H.E.: As retirement was not falling from the sky – I had even been extended to work up to 66 – I could draw on my long-term planning: I have always pursued academic and think-tank work as far as possible in parallel with my diplomatic career. In 2005 the [University of Innsbruck](#) made me an Adjunct Professor for international politics after successfully completing a “habilitation” process, the equivalent of a Ph.D. I connected as [Distinguished Professor at the Centre for Security, Diplomacy, and Strategy \(CSDS\)](#) of the Brussels School of Governance, where I helped install a Korea Chair before my assignment to Korea. I started the [CSDS Policy Brief](#) on foreign policy issues, focusing on Asia. I am happy to say that while we had planned for 12 annual editions, we are finishing 2021 with 26! I taught a course on non-state actors in foreign policy as well as courses on EU-Asia relations at [Webster University, Vienna](#); [Libera Università Internazionale Degli Studi Sociali "Guido Carli" \(LUISS\)](#), Rome; [University of Innsbruck](#); [Danube University, Krems/Austria](#). A Fellowship at the [Geneva Centre for Security Policy \(GCSP\)](#), and advising positions for two think tanks, [Center for Asia Pacific Strategy \(CAPS\)](#), Washington D.C.; [STEAR](#) (student think tank for Europe-Asia Relations), Singapore, round up a busy schedule. Co-editing and contributing to an edited volume with Palgrave on the cooperation of the EU and Korea on cybersecurity took up more time and energy than originally expected.

Q. It has been just over a year since you retired from your Ambassadorship of the EU to the ROK. Having spent nearly four years in Seoul, what are the things you miss from your time in the country?

H.E.: Not having been able to return because of COVID, thus not seeing friends, no common meals in nice Korean restaurants they made me discover is something I miss. In addition, it makes a difference whether you are part of the policy process. Meeting counterparts in person, as opposed to reading and thinking about politics. Hands-on for forty years of career and four years in Korea was nice!

Q. In your time as Ambassador of the EU to the Republic of Korea, you were involved in many different programs and received an Honorary Citizenship of Seoul for your service to the city. What was your favorite project or activity you participated in while in South Korea?

H.E.: A good form of ‘hands-on’ was public diplomacy which I liked a lot – meeting citizens, students at high school and university

level and working also with those with handicaps. There I had a close cooperation with the Metropolitan Government. For example, the EU Goes to School project, where all my colleague ambassadors have participated and still do, COVID permitting. The Euro-Village at the opening of the [Seoullo 7017 in 2017](#), the annual [Car Free Day](#), [Open House Day for Seoul](#) citizens, discussion with city council members on greening the city were some other events which marked the cooperation with the City of Seoul.

Many lectures and discussions at all major universities as well as institutions like the [Asia Society](#) helped me to raise the profile of the EU while learning from the interactions.

Getting into Naver world, special to Korea in Korean, was also a challenge that we engaged in with [young motivated bloggers](#). Ever since the 2018 Paralympics drawing attention to persons who have to live with various handicaps has been part of the work by providing a platform, participating in the opening of exhibitions. [Raising consciousness](#), fighting exclusion from society, allowing them to participate are the key ideas. Some universities like [Wonkwang in Iksan](#) run special programs to develop those working with persons with disabilities. HUMANAID is an active NGO publishing a [magazine](#), newspaper and organizing exhibitions of artists with a handicap. A planned trip to Europe failed due to COVID and had to be changed to an [exhibition](#) with Project Ability. It opened on the first day of my retirement!

Supporting [Anna's House's Seongnam](#) and Father Vincenzo, who provides daily meals for the homeless, was a pleasure alongside my artist friends, the painter [Kim Hyun-jung](#) and the flutist [Jasmine Choi](#), helped me, as well as the European Chamber of Commerce in Korea.

Another project was the virtual concert again with friends for Europe Day, 9 May 2020 – the European Union commemorates its founding when French foreign minister Schuman presented his plan to pacify Europe – the common control over coal and steel to render the secret production of weapons impossible. An in-person event was no longer possible, so we produced a short online video featuring the national anthems of the EU and Korea and works from Bach and Mozart as a [contribution to peace](#). Please watch it [here](#)! A year earlier, 2019, we celebrated this event in person at [Korea University](#), for the first time a joint venture of the four Jean Monnet Chairs in Korea at the SKY universities and HUFs University. In the spirit of Jean Monnet, four competitive universities worked together! A seminar and a reception with students, professors with the diplomatic corps was a nice people-to-people event.

Representing the European Union is always a challenge, as it is abstract, an idea, institutions, and buildings in Brussels. My colleagues could refer to Rome, to the Eiffel Tower, to Italian food or Roja wine ... This is all part of European culture and tradition, thus also good for the EU Ambassador, but explaining the idea of a peace project, the merits of cooperation and integration, of fighting for human rights worldwide – that is more difficult. I tried to turn the 10th anniversary of the Strategic Partnership with Korea into an event in launching a public [competition for a logo](#), in cooperation with the public diplomacy section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I also made an effort to present the EU not only as an economic actor. As important as it is as the largest investor in Korea and is the fourth largest trading partner based on a free trade agreement, it is also an important political player and security provider supporting a diplomatic solution on the Peninsula. Bidding farewell to the Korean destroyer Choi Young in Busan to join the EU anti-piracy operation ATALANTA off the coast of Somalia was a means to make this ongoing security cooperation visible. It should be enlarged as part of the Indo-Pacific Strategy – Korea has become an important middle power and has to shoulder global responsibilities e.g. beyond the Korean Peninsula.

The last-minute introduction of a [Korean Green Deal](#) inspired by the EU remains a lasting reward. The EU project, Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia, is implemented in Korea in the area of [cybersecurity](#) – as one of the most connected societies and technological leader, an excellent partner.

Talking politics and a larger role of the EU: I recently had the pleasure to reconnect with my friend and former colleague US Ambassador Harry Harris for an [ambassadors' talk on the Indo-Pacific by RUSI](#)!

Q. As editor of the [CSDS Policy Brief Series](#), what are popular topics of interest that people like to read about?

H.E.: The CSDS has an Asia focus. Hosting the Korea Chair and a Japan readership, thus researchers provide briefs. In addition, we covered by way of example [European border problems](#), the search for a European security culture ([European Compass](#)), the implications of [emerging technologies](#) on foreign policy, [food security](#), new forms of [minilateralism](#), the [Indo-Pacific strategy](#), [Russia challenging Europe](#) and of course [Korea](#) and [North Korea](#). Concerning the latter, we published [five background briefs](#) that fed into the process of drafting.

Q. Working at the Brussels School of Governance, you have kept an interest in Korea-related policy. In November, you participated in the [Korea-Europe Policy Dialogue in partnership with the Sejong Institute](#). What were the significant issues you discussed relating to peace on the peninsula?

H.E.: The EU-Korea relationship rests on strong pillars:

- Mindful of the 10th anniversary of the [Strategic Partnership](#), needs to be reinforced in deeds, not words – the three agreements (Political Framework, FTA, Crisis Management Agreement) provide the basic framework.
- This basic framework was enlarged through the 2018 Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia policy program, where cooperation of the EU and Korea in [Cyber security](#) is the pilot project - a chance not to miss.
- The Indo-Pacific Strategy was the latest EU policy blueprint providing the opportunity to integrate the ideas of the connectivity strategy; Korea's new Southern policy dovetails well with this approach. As the Global Gateway will enlarge the EU's engagement beyond Asia, the EU and Korea should conclude soon a connectivity and digital partnership to improve physical and people-to-people connections and importantly, to address the challenges of digitalization and green transition. Strengthened they should join hands and cooperate in Africa which will be a prime target of Global Gateway. Korea is the role model for successful development and would be an excellent partner to team up with the EU.

Q. EU member countries and South Korea have strengthened their economic, security, and bilateral relations since the 2010 Strategic Partnership and 2011 Free Trade Agreement. As an advocate for developing these policies, in which other areas would you like to see further cooperation?

H.E.: As mentioned, I am working on a book on cybersecurity cooperation between the EU and Korea. It is striking that e-commerce which got another boost through the pandemic is not covered by the FTA. Companies from the EU are the largest investor in Korea – investment is not covered. Greening the economy has repercussions on trade, services, and finance – concerning the latter awareness raising is still necessary. The EU has developed a common language and a clear definition of what is 'sustainable' - "[taxonomy](#)" is the horrible technical term. "Green" is particularly important in [finance](#) as this is an effective instrument to channel investment to build a circular economy and meet the 2030 targets. Most importantly "green" finance is a promising area for discussion and cooperation. Workshops, like with [KIEP](#), an excellent think tank with great interest in the EU, were part of awareness-raising. The Global Green Growth Institute's (GGGI) in Seoul is an important partner in this respect.

About H.E. Michael Reiterer, Former Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Korea



H.E. Michael Reiterer is Former Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Korea, having previously held the position of Principal Advisor at the Asia and Pacific Department, European External Action Service (EEAS), Brussels, in charge of strategic and security matters. He previously served as EU Ambassador to Switzerland and the Principality of Liechtenstein (2007-2011), Minister/Deputy Head of the EU-Delegation to Japan (2002-2006), and ASEM Counselor (1998-2002).

Ambassador Reiterer studied law at the University of Innsbruck (Dr. Juris) and holds diplomas in international relations from the Johns Hopkins University/Bologna Center and the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva. In 2005, he was appointed adjunct professor (Dozent) for international politics at the University of Innsbruck. Time permitting, he teaches at various universities and specializes in EU foreign policy, EU-Asia relations, and interregionalism, areas in which he has published extensively.

He is currently serving as Distinguished Professor for International Security and Diplomacy at the Institute of European Studies in Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) and as Adjunct Professor of International Politics at the University of Innsbruck. He serves as Associate Fellow for the Global Fellowship Initiative at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) and Senior Advisor to the Center for Asia Pacific Strategy (CAPS), Washington D.C.



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[Eat Taste Learn] Moroccan Chicken Pastilla with Almonds

September 13, 2021 — Asia Society Korea kicked off its halal food series by collaborating with the **Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco** to introduce pastilla, a type of Moroccan pie. The halal dish is a delicious appetizer, often served at the beginning of special meals, and is one of the most emblematic of Moroccan foods.

Pastilla is usually prepared with poultry or seafood, and traditionally, the highest quality of pies would be made with pigeon meat. Although there is no pigeon in this pastilla, we are sure you will enjoy the flavors of the special recipe we have shared with you. Our halal meat pie is made with crispy pastry, almonds, and a tender chicken filling, processed and prepared according to Islamic law.



Moroccan Chicken Pastilla with Almonds (Public Domain)

#EatTasteLearn encourages you to try healthy cuisine by promoting a sustainable food culture. Do not hesitate to join us with this ecological initiative!

MAIN INGREDIENTS

- 1 whole (skinless) chicken split into 4 parts [For Almonds]
 - 4.4 lb finely chopped onion
 - 1 parsley finely chopped
 - ½ head coriander diced
 - 3 cinnamon sticks
 - 10 saffron petals
 - 2 tbsp. coffee ginger
 - 1C. pepper
 - 1C. ghee or clarified butter
 - 8 cl of oil
 - Salt
 - 1 cup of honey
 - 4 eggs
 - 650 g of blanched almonds
 - 100 g icing sugar (or according to taste)
 - 1 C. cinnamon powder
- [For the Dough]
- Use phyllo sheets or 400 g of pastilla leaves
 - 80 g of butter
 - Oil for cooking
 - 1 egg yolk
- [For the Garnish]
- Powdered sugar
 - Cinnamon powder

INSTRUCTIONS

- In a cast-iron skillet or heavy-bottomed pot, insert chicken, onion, butter, oil, and herbs.
- Cook over low heat. The onion needs to melt into the chicken and with the spices. Remove chicken once it is thoroughly cooked and discard the bones.
- On low heat, add honey to the sauce, stir until the onion takes the consistency of a jam.
- Separate oil from “jam” and reserve for the pastilla or (phyllo) leaves.
- Add boneless chicken into the onion sauce.
- Add the eggs.
- Cook the filling on low heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Set aside.
- Fry or grill the blanched almonds until they turn into golden sunset yellow.
- Finely chop the almonds and mix with powdered sugar and cinnamon.
- Mix the reserved oil with melted butter. Coat the phyllo or pastilla sheets.
- Insert the stuffing in order to have two layers, then use the pastilla sheets to cover the stuffing (as a pie).
- In a cast-iron pan, brown the pastilla in an oven preheated to 200°C-240°C.
- Decorate the pastilla in a lattice pattern with the cinnamon-sugar mixture.

In partnership with



[Eat Taste Learn] Kuwaiti Murabyan with Shrimp



Screen capture of Kuwaiti murabyan with shrimp

October 28, 2021 — Asia Society Korea continues its halal food series by collaborating with the **Embassy of the State of Kuwait**. Kuwaiti Ambassador **H.E. Bader Al-Awadi** kindly showcased the recipe for murabyan, a traditional Kuwaiti rice dish with the official chef of the Kuwait Embassy, **Mr. Harun Mohammed**. Check out their recipe for Kuwaiti murabyan with shrimp that will invite you to an authentic culinary experience of the State of Kuwait.

Rice is a staple cuisine and culture of Asia. This special episode of the halal food series covers the simplest cooking method for and traditional presentation of murabyan — a beloved dish made with Basmati rice and shrimp. This traditional Kuwaiti dish is flavored with sautéed onions, Curcuma powder, cilantro, and a variety of spices. With recipes from the Kuwait Embassy, dive into the world of murabyan and explore the connections between touch, texture, aroma, and flavor.

#EatTasteLearn encourages you to try healthy cuisine by promoting a sustainable food culture. Do not hesitate to join us in this ecological initiative!



H.E. Bader Al-Awadi, Kuwaiti Ambassador to the Republic of Korea (Middle),
Mr. Harun Mohammed, Chef at the Kuwaiti Ambassador's Residence (Left)

INGREDIENTS

- 5 cups of Basmati rice (or 1.5 kg)
- 2 kg of shrimp (or 2 bags of shrimp be cleaned and cut in half)
- 3 big onions (chopped)
- 2 teaspoons of minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon of fresh minced ginger
- 1 cup of fresh chopped cilantro
- 1/4 cup of corn oil
- 9 cups of hot water
- 1 tablespoon of curcuma powder (turmeric)
- 1/2 tablespoon of Indian curry
- 1 tablespoon of crushed mixed spices (black pepper, red hot pepper, cumin, ginger powder, paprika, coriander powder)
- 1 teaspoon of coriander powder
- 1 teaspoon of salt

INSTRUCTIONS

- Wash the Basmati rice very well and leave it for 30 minutes at room temperature.
- Place a big cooking pot on the range at medium heat, then add half the shrimp and half a teaspoon of the curcuma powder. Cook them together for 15 minutes. After that, pour out the excess liquid.
- Add the corn oil and the chopped onion to the big pot and mix it until the onion turns gold or yellow, then put in the rest of the shrimp, garlic, ginger, salt, and all the crushed mixed spices. Mix everything very well and let it cook for 10 minutes. After that, add the cilantro and mix everything very well. Close the pot and let it cook for another 15 minutes.
- Take out half of the shrimp mixture and put it in a bowl.
- Remove the water from the Basmati rice.
- Put the rice in the pot and stir it into the other shrimp and spices. Pour in the 9 cups of hot water. Stir the rice softly with the other ingredients, then close the pot and leave it for 10 minutes on medium heat.
- Check the rice to be sure that the water starts to evaporate. After checking that the water is evaporating, lower the heat to the lowest level. Put a simmering ring under the cooking pot and let it cook for 30 minutes.
- Reheat the other half of the shrimp in a pan.
- Open the rice pot after it simmers for 30 minutes and serve it on a big plate.
- Garnish and decorate the dish by using the rest of the shrimp that were reheated in Step 8.



Participants



H.E. Bader Al-Awadi is Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Kuwait to the Republic of Korea since 2016, and Dean of the Arab Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Republic of Korea since May, 2021.

H.E. Bader Al-Awadi served as an Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Cuba during the period from 2010 to 2016, and he served as a diplomat in the Permanent Mission of the State of Kuwait to the United Nations in New York for almost 10 years, where he was in charge of the working agenda of the General Assembly Ordinary Sessions at the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, Middle Eastern affairs in the Security Council and the subject of Kuwaiti POWs in Iraq. Also, he was a Counsellor and Deputy Head of Mission in the Embassy of the State of Kuwait to the Republic of France. He started his career as diplomat at the Department of Arab Nations in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait in 1992.

H.E. Bader Al-Awadi vowed to strengthen the historical relations between the Republic of Korea and the State of Kuwait in all fields, and he was able to widen the cooperation between the two countries further to new fields, such as signing eight new MOUs related to culture, customs, military training, health, free zones and direct investment, which have been signed during the visit of H.E. Lee Nak-yeon former Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea to the State of Kuwait in 2019.

Currently, H.E. Bader Al-Awadi aims to continue in strengthening the cooperation between the Republic of Korea and the State of Kuwait, especially in fields of combating COVID-19 and construction. He also aims to build new bridges between the Arab countries and the Republic of Korea in all fields in general, and the field of economy in particular.



Mr. Harun Mohammed lived in the State of Kuwait for 30 years. During his life in Kuwait, he learned how to cook authentic Kuwaiti Food from the Kuwaiti families and Ambassador Al-Awadi's family.

Mr. Harun Mohammed works as an Ambassador's Chef since 2010. He served H.E. Bader Al-Awadi, Ambassador of the State of Kuwait, in Cuba from 2010 to 2016. Currently, he works at the residence of His Excellency in the Republic of Korea.

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Featured Interview

[Innovative Minds] The 4th Korean Wave: From Trot to Makjang



Interviewee Sean Sea-Yeon Kim

September 3, 2021 — As a part of our Leo Gala Series and Innovative Minds, Asia Society Korea interviewed **Sean Sea-Yeon Kim**, Chief Strategy Officer of Chorokbaem Media and Vice Chairman of Asia 21 Korea Chapter.

Q. There is a worldwide infatuation with the Korean Wave (Hallyu). In South Korea, we've witnessed many ups and downs in the history of Hallyu, from the stigmatization of entertainers as a vocation to becoming Korea's golden goose. What makes Hallyu competitive in your view?

SK: From an anthropological standpoint, it has to do with the fact that Koreans have a strong shame culture and are very conscious of the other. Foreigners, especially Westerners, have a culture of guilt and tend to have strong individualism that guides their moral and behavioral compasses, regardless of what others think about them.

The downside of Korean people's sensitivity to the judgment of others is that they tend to report less satisfaction and happiness compared to their actual state of affairs. However, these same qualities also translate to huge strengths in specific fields. Concerns about the views of others push industries such as plastic surgery or entertainment to create products that are favorable to the masses. These sectors that rely on such quality will thrive. Also, fashion, design, and advertisement spheres have great potential for South Korea going forward.

Q. There was a time in Korean television when reality TV was the name of the game. The advent of survival audition programs changed this megatrend, the de-facto platform for broadcasters until the mid-to-late 2000s. From Superstar K in 2009 to similar shows like K-Pop Stars (2011-2016), we witnessed the so-called heyday of audition programs. How are Korean audition programs today different from their predecessors?

SK: There are audition programs worldwide, but what sets Korea's audition programs apart is that K-Pop has international competitiveness. Second, what is important in K-Pop is the unique structure of an agency's ability to plan and train its idols. Someone does not raise foreign entertainers, but rather talented people are selected and promoted to release their albums. Conversely, K-Pop idols are trained to do things from an early age and are therefore aesthetically commercialized by agencies with solid training systems. As a result, the characteristic of Korean audition programs is that more young people want to enter the system through auditions, which act as a gateway. It's a strength.



Photo Credit: Chorokbaem Media

Q. However, there is also pessimism underlying these auditions, which some people claim are destined to follow in the footsteps of reality TV shows. These critics argue that a trajectory of emergence, popularization, fatigue and eventual decline is inevitable. Is this a sustainable model in your view?

SK: Like any other show, the audition program needs to be competitive to keep its ratings. They cannot just turn into another mundane platform. Those who plan and design audition programs also try new and unique things to keep success alive. For example, you can change the genre or alter the format like they did with Trot. For instance, there could be audition programs that aim to produce not the next generation of pop musicians or singers but musical actors and actresses. You would depict the process of these audition contestants going through a ton of training and grooming during a 120-session musical training program. The program would help the finalists debut as an idol group. Like any other reality TV show, audition programs can also add fun and unique elements to appeal to a broader spectrum of viewers. Otherwise, people are going to get bored. Considering how good Korean people are at objectively viewing talent and what appeals to the public, I anticipate that new audition programs will continue to emerge. There is no question that there are specific fundamental strengths attached to the survival audition format that, with proper modifications, can survive the test of time.

Q. With six to seven audition programs being broadcast each year, we have viewers complaining about "audition fatigue." This complaint essentially blew over with the Trot fever of 2019, but what kind of effort is needed to sustain its popularity?

SK: The Trot audition came out of an attempt to diversify the audition program and create something unique. Now expert opinion regarding its prospects remains divided. Some say we are looking at a flashing success that will be short-lived; others claim this is the beginning of a long-term trend. Whether Trot will continue to be a popular mode of survival audition program or not depends entirely on how the genre of music is perceived. If Trot manages to appeal to a younger audience who continue to consume and listen — the kind of genre that we listen to all the time — then it's going to have a shot. This is precisely why Trot needs to have more sub-genres to gradually cater to a broader demographic to suit younger music consumers better. If Trot stays in the same shape and form, I think it will fall out of favor after being a temporary vogue.

Q. A few years back, there was a [feature article](#) that came out of Spain which spotlighted South Korea as "the new world power of TV series," followed by the United States and the United Kingdom. Some statistics show between 2013 and 2018, South Korea (32 shows) was the biggest exporter of TV series after the U.S. (58 shows) and the U.K. (40 shows). What makes Korean shows so unique?

SK: While the Anglo-American production of TV shows focuses on the plot structure, Korean dramas revolve around psychology — which is to say that they develop a plot progression based on the main characters' psychology that evokes optimal sympathy from the viewers.

Arguably, Korean shows may seem to have weaker plots, but they attract a large viewership by stimulating the public psyche through powerful acting and psychological empathy. This is why Korean dramas would manifest features such as dramatic pauses or flashbacks. Korean dramas are very good at using background scenery and music to bring catharsis. They would often shoot at attractive locations with appropriate music playing in the background to evoke empathy. Of course, some people express their dissatisfaction with this kind of storytelling, which feels dragged out and stifling, but these features add to the emotional appeal for others. All of this combined makes Korean unique, which has helped them attain a competitive edge.

Q. It has become virtually impossible to discuss Korean dramas without bringing up the issue of 'makjang.' (Makjang can be translated to things like "to take too far" or "to reach a limit" — usually coupled with exaggerated characters and events.) Recently, works such as [The Penthouse: War in Life and Love \(ft. Marriage and Divorce\)](#) are getting favorable ratings and reviews. The former critiques Korea's draconian real estate and education realities, while the latter focuses on scandalous Love and extramarital affairs. What is the secret to their success?

SK: We didn't anticipate this buzz. First of all, makjang denotes a story that progresses in a way that is unlikely to be matched in reality. Although makjang dramas have unrealistic plots, it is essential to build empathy to be successful. If the viewers cannot empathize with a given story, it's just a mess. As an example, Penthouse is unrealistic for the characters to kill, cheat, and slander to advance in life. Still, as long as it resonates with the viewers emotionally, it's okay. The reasons may vary, but perhaps there is an inner moral compass in us that imagines committing heinous acts every once in a while, and we see ourselves in the images of these characters. In Love, the viewers are provided with a ridiculous series of unrealistic extramarital affairs. Still, it has been hugely successful because it created sympathy among those who watched and



Photo Credit: Chorokbaem Media

identified with the show. Success here depends entirely on empathy.

Q: Is there a program or show whose success you doubted at first but eventually became a hit?

SK: We took over Chorokbaem Media around 2016 or 2017. Frankly, most of the upcoming projects seemed like they were going to go well. I think makjang dramas are the kind of works that fit perfectly with this question. We expected somewhat moderate success befitting past makjang works, but some of our recent works exceeded our expectations this year.

Q: In the early 2000s, there were fewer platforms where dramas could be aired. But now we have a more comprehensive range of media, including YouTube and OTTs like Netflix. The axis of the market seems to be shifting from broadcasting stations to production companies. As someone managing a highly successful production company yourself, do you think the target consumer group has changed at all?

SK: I would say that the target consumer group has expanded rather than changed. The surge in demand has created a very diverse consumer base, including those watching our shows from abroad. In the past, the primary target audience was Korean people in Korea and, more specifically, women who controlled the remote controls at home. Now that has expanded to young people with the advent of smartphones. As opposed to the old days when you needed to acquire copyrights to a specific country to sell something abroad, now we live in a borderless society and marketplace with global OTTs organized across national boundaries.

Q: What needs to be done to improve the drama production environment?

SK: In the past, production companies used to be hooked by the broadcasting networks — completely subordinate to their judgment and decisions. Now that has been turned upside down due to the broad sweeping changes in the industry. Today we have a much better environment where we can plan our own shows and produce them the way we planned. With the contents market liberalizing and shifting to a seller's market, we receive offers to subsidize our productions. We have guys from Netflix, Amazon, Hulu, and HBO, among others, coming in as content buyers. There are also arrangements like Netflix Original that expect exclusive production and distribution rights. Because the Anglo-American market and subscribers base tend to be incomparably larger than our domestic market, these outside stakeholders tend to get a much bigger slice of the profits and distribution rights. Overall, I think this is a very promising milestone and a step in the right direction for production companies in our line of work.

About the Interviewee



Sean Sea-Yeon Kim is the Chief Strategy Officer (CSO) of Chorokbaem Media. Before Chorokbaem, he was Chief Executive Officer of W Investment & Finance Co., Limited. Previously, he was a Partner at the LIAN Consulting Group, which he founded in 2006. As a Certified Public Accountant, Sean led many merger & acquisition projects while providing advisory services for listed companies.

Sean completed his Master's degree in Information Systems at Drexel University in Pennsylvania and a Master's in Business Administration from Seoul National University, where he also received his B.A. in Business Administration. *Read more about Asia 21 Korea Chapter [here](#).*

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War on Terror: Reflecting on the 2007 South Korea-Taliban Hostage Crisis



September 3, 2021 — Asia Society Korea's Senior Contributor **Dr. Mason Richey** interviewed ROK Army **Lieutenant General (ret.) In-Bum Chun**, a key figure in the South Korean negotiation team during the Afghanistan hostage crisis of 2007. Against the backdrop of the Biden administration's decision to withdraw from Kabul and the rapid gains of the Taliban, Gen. Chun offers a composite picture of the situation in Afghanistan and ROK-Afghan relations.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the September 11 (9/11) attacks on the United States, which caused the dramatic collapse of the iconic World Trade Center in New York City, snuffing out 2,606 lives in fire, smoke, and rubble. With the death toll in Washington, DC, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania added, in total 2,977 people perished on 9/11—the deadliest ever single assault on US territory by a foreign adversary. In the immediate aftermath, the administration of President George W. Bush decided to invade Afghanistan, whose ruling Taliban had allowed safe haven for Al Qaeda, the terrorist group responsible for the attacks.

So began the US “[war on terror](#),” which came to determine a significant part of Washington's approach to international relations throughout the 2000s. Only now is this chapter of US foreign policy and grand strategy coming to a close, as “Great Power Competition” with China has superseded counter-terrorism and the US recalibrates its international engagement away from non-critical interests and theaters. Most recently, this has manifested in the US decision to withdraw from Afghanistan—a symbolic choice considering that it is where the “war on terror” started.

Despite this evolution in US foreign policy priorities, one should not forget that the “war on terror” eventually attained global dimensions, which meant US allies were drawn into the picture. They deployed troops, advisors, intelligence agents, and medical and engineering corps to places like Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Somalia, the Sahel, etc. They fought battles against insurgents and tried to rebuild failed states. They made sacrifices. South Korea was no different.

One of the forgotten stories of the “[global war on terror](#)” in Afghanistan is a major hostage crisis involving South Korea and the Taliban in 2007. The tense situation required both delicate negotiations and a back-up military presence to potentially extract the hostages in case talks failed. One of the figures in this operation was Lt. Gen. (ret.) Chun In-bum, who was dispatched to Afghanistan with the negotiation team. Lt. Gen. Chun was awarded the Korean Presidential Citation for his role in the crisis. He recounts his experience in the following interview.

Q. What was the context for your deployment to Afghanistan in 2007? We know that beginning with Kim Dae-jung, South Korea joined the US-led coalition in Afghanistan in 2001, sending medics and engineers accompanied by two hundred soldiers for protection. With the Taliban out of power, conditions in Afghanistan were conducive to greater international people-to-people exchange, and in 2007 a South Korean Presbyterian church group used this opening to dispatch a 23-person missionary team. What happened to them?

Lt. Gen.: In July 2007, while en route from Kandahar to Kabul, the group was [taken hostage](#) by Taliban militants, who pressed

numerous demands: Seoul's withdrawal of its forces from Afghanistan, assurances of the end of South Korean missionary work in the country, and ransom payment for hostage release. The Taliban also demanded that the Afghan government of Hamid Karzai release Taliban prisoners. On July 22, South Korea sent a negotiating team to Kabul, including military personnel. Initial talks between the Taliban and South Korea failed, and the Taliban murdered one of the South Korean hostages on July 25. A second execution followed several days later. Thankfully, after forty-two days of frustrating and constipating negotiations, the rest of the hostages were released unharmed by the Taliban.

Q. Before deploying from Korea to Afghanistan for this mission, what were your expectations for the situation? And what was the mission?

Lt. Gen.: The primary mission for the Korean military was to support the negotiations that were under the supervision of the Blue House, with the vice-minister of the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs \(MOFA\)](#) as the local head of the mission. The team in Kabul included the MOFA element and a military support group, which I represented. The MOFA element had negotiators who met with the Taliban and their representatives. Although I can't elaborate, these negotiators were more than your ordinary diplomats. The military element provided information and transportation, as well as liaison with the [International Security Assistance Force \(ISAF\)](#) headquarters. Afghanistan was a war zone, and so communications, movement, accommodations, etc. required military support. As the negotiations became prolonged—and with the killing of the two hostages—a military option was developed in case negotiations finally failed.



Success was defined as the rescue of all twenty-one remaining hostages; this was a highly unlikely outcome. If we had to use military force there was no way to guarantee “success.” Therefore, supporting the negotiation effort and at the same time preparing for a hostage rescue was the stated mission. Full responsibility for the outcome of a military option lay with me. Thankfully it never came to that.

Q. How many other soldiers deployed with you? Were they in a standing unit, or were they put together especially for the hostage mission in Afghanistan?

Lt. Gen.: Hostage negotiations occurred in Ghazni, which was approximately one hundred and seventy kilometers from Kabul, where the MOFA element and ISAF HQ were located. I and my staff of ten officers stayed in ISAF HQ, while a small military detachment was sent to Ghazni for direct support as well as situational awareness. Also, the ROK military unit that had already been deployed to Afghanistan was still stationed in Bagram airbase, and it provided all logistical support that I needed. For the military operations, Korean Special Forces were put on alert and the 707th Special Mission Unit was put on isolation operations with some ROK air assets. These units were in Korea at an undisclosed location.

Q. What did you prepare for? Was there any training in advance for this type of hostage mission?

Lt. Gen.: The 707th is a hostage rescue unit. They were in isolation, preparing for a possible hostage rescue five thousand kilometers away. They conducted rehearsals and collected and refined available information, which, however, was vague at best. My immediate task was to gain support from the ISAF special units from Turkey, Germany, and Australia. At this stage, US support was focused on critical information and intelligence. The support that was provided by these nations, and especially by the United States, should not be understated. This was a very difficult mission for Korea. The Koreans were trained for terrorist attacks on Korean soil; the Koreans were trained for urban operations and with immediate support being available. Afghanistan, on the other hand, was a desert with unfamiliar buildings that were like small forts, and there was very limited available support.

Q. Some people accused the missionaries of acting recklessly by going to Afghanistan with a church mission group. Were you irritated to be sent to a dangerous locale for people who may not have acted very wisely?

Lt. Gen.: No. My mission was to protect the Korean people, not to judge their actions. Of course, I was frustrated that my men and women would be in harm's way, and that many of my people might not return alive, but that is the lot of a soldier. In one instance, we received false information that our women were being gang raped by the Taliban terrorists. At that point, of the twenty-one surviving hostages, sixteen were women. I was unable to sleep with this information, and my senior colonel and I volunteered to be exchanged

for the immediate release of the women hostages. As the vice-minister pondered this option, I was scared, but in the end this option was not presented to the Taliban and we later found out that the information was false and that the women were treated well.

Q. How did the mission come to an end?

Lt. Gen. After twenty-six days, two of the female hostages were released as a show of good faith, and for health reasons. When I interviewed them they seemed healthy and explained that they were treated well. One of the women had actually tried to give up her freedom for someone else in the group. I thought that was very courageous. On 28 August, forty days after the abduction, the Taliban agreed to release our hostages. The next day twelve hostages were released in increments of three or four. On 30 August, the remaining seven were released in the same manner. These were nail biting moments that felt like hours and days. A token payment was provided to the Taliban to “cover expenses” for taking care of the Koreans. South Korea also re-stated its intention to withdraw its fixed military presence that was already in-country since 2001. But this wasn’t a concession—Seoul was already planning the withdrawal anyway.



Q. South Korea sent troops back to Afghanistan in 2010, as protection for reconstruction teams. How do you feel about the overall involvement of South Korea in military missions in Afghanistan?

Lt. Gen.: The Korean element provided engineer support to ISAF. As always they were the go-to unit if you wanted something done right and fast. Korea also provided other forms of security assistance to the efforts in Afghanistan. The Korean units made a reputation for themselves as being successful in civil affairs operations. Maybe this was because the Koreans themselves were—just a few decades ago—as destitute and poor as the Afghans. In the end, Korea supported our allies and helped needy people. The Korean military accomplished its mission honorably.

Q. How do you judge the US withdrawal from Afghanistan after 20 years of active military presence there?

Lt. Gen. It has been sad and unnerving to see the unfolding of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. It is sad because of the suffering that the innocent will have to endure with the Taliban back in power, and it is unnerving because it is reminiscent of American [withdrawal from Vietnam](#) in 1975. First, the plan for an orderly withdrawal was faulty, to say the least, but I challenge anyone to guarantee such operations would have ever gone as planned. In war, shit happens. Secondly, the American way of war involves a certain nobility, putting itself on a higher moral pedestal, but that has limitations that a less scrupulous enemy will always take advantage of. For the same reason we trust America, American enemies loathe the US military and see the American way of war as a weakness to be exploited.

Q. What do you think the US decision to withdraw from Afghanistan—effectively admitting defeat—says about the US’s reputation, credibility, or competence as an alliance partner?

Lt. Gen.: If I were the US, I would have been out ten years ago. Having said that, what a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan will turn into and how it will affect the world is the real question. The next point to ponder is what the US has learned from its experience in Afghanistan, as well as what lessons its adversaries and enemies will learn. Again, in the eyes of dictators, it must seem that the US is defeatable. It is not easy to get the US to go to war, and even more difficult for it to conduct a long war. Other than that, the US is a reliable ally and a formidable adversary; all should be warned. Despite this, I would like South Korea to have a nuclear deterrent against North Korea and China.

Q. Lt. Gen. Chun, thank you for taking the time to provide your thoughts.

Lt. Gen.: You’re welcome. I’d also like to add words of thanks to both the Afghan government and ISAF for assistance during the hostage ordeal. The US was the lead in this support, but officers and personnel from other nations, such as the UK, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Denmark, Sweden, and Afghanistan, gave tremendous help and aid. The names have faded, but their kindness and sacrifice will always be remembered.

This interview was slightly edited for length and clarity.

About the Participants



Lieutenant General (Ret.) In-Bum Chun is a graduate of the Korea Military Academy (KMA) in 1977. He was selected as the aide to Lieutenant General Lee, Ki-Baek. In 1983 General Lee, as Chairman of the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff, was a victim of the Rangoon bombing. Lieutenant General (Ret.) Chun was credited with saving General Lee's life and was awarded the National Security Medal (Kwang-Bok). Upon completion of Regimental Command, Lieutenant General (Ret.) Chun was assigned as the Chief of the Election Support Branch, Civil-Military Affairs/Strategic Operations Directorate at the Multi-National Force (MNF) in Iraq. He was recognized by both the Republic of Korea and the United States for his contribution to the first "Fair and Free" elections in Iraq on January 30, 2005, with the Hwa-Rang Combat Medal and the U.S. Bronze Star Medal.

From November of 2005, Lieutenant General (Ret.) Chun served as the Director of U.S. Affairs at the Korean Ministry of National Defense and was involved in negotiations and cooperation with the U.S. on the relocation of U.S. forces, camp returns, ROK/U.S. Joint Vision Study, Special Measures Agreement, and the transition of the Wartime Operational Control.

On July 19, 2007, twenty-three Korean missionary workers were kidnapped by the Taliban. Lieutenant General (Ret.) Chun was credited with the successful rescue mission and was awarded the Korean Presidential Citation. Upon completion of his duties as the Deputy Director for Strategic Planning at ROK JCS, Lieutenant General (Ret.) Chun took over the OPCON Transition Group.

LTG(R) Chun commanded the 27th Infantry Division and was the Senior Member of the UN Command Military Armistice Commission. In November of 2013, he was promoted to Lieutenant General and was assigned as the Commander of the ROK Special Warfare Command. Lieutenant General (Ret.) Chun retired from active duty as of July 31, 2016.

Upon his retirement, he conducted concurrent fellowships with the Brookings Institute and the U.S.-Korea Institute (USKI) at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) until October 2017. He was also a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Sam-Nunn School of Advanced Studies at Georgia Tech.

Currently, Lieutenant General (Ret.) Chun is the Vice President of the Korea Chapter of the Association of the United States Army and MIG Alley Chapter of the U.S. Air Force Association. Moreover, he serves as a Vice President of the Korea Freedom Federation, an Advisory Member of the National Policy Planning Committee, and Board Member of the Korean Animal Welfare Association. *Watch his recent appearance at our webinar on North Korean asymmetric capabilities [here](#).*



Dr. Mason Richey is a senior contributing writer to Asia Society Korea and an associate professor of international politics at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (Seoul, South Korea). Dr. Richey has also held positions as a POSCO Visiting Research Fellow at the East-West Center (Honolulu, HI) and a DAAD Scholar at the University of Potsdam. His research focuses on U.S. and European foreign and security policy as applied to the Asia-Pacific. Recent scholarly articles have appeared (inter alia) in *Pacific Review*, *Asian Security*, *Global Governance*, and *Foreign Policy Analysis*. Shorter analyses and opinion pieces have been published in *War on the Rocks*, *Le Monde*, the *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, and *Forbes*, among other venues. Dr. Richey received his Ph.D. from Binghamton University, New York. *Read about his most recently published work, [The Future of the Korean Peninsula](#) [here](#).*



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South Korea's Supply Chain Disruptions: Is Seoul Caught Between Beijing and Washington?



Guest Speaker Orville Schell

November 16, 2021 — As President Biden kicks off his virtual summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Asia Society Korea Executive Director **Yvonne Kim** hosted **Orville Schell**, Arthur Ross Director of the [Center on U.S.-China Relations](#), to discuss Korea's recent supply chain disruptions in the broader context of U.S.-China great power rivalry. Schell, who is a long-time China observer, author, journalist, and former Dean and professor at UC Berkeley.

South Korea finds itself in a precarious position as the U.S.-China trade war intensifies across the region and spills over to impact the policies of regional stakeholders. Analysts have attributed the recent Korean diesel exhaust fuel (DEF) shortage or "urea crisis" to the ongoing Sino-U.S. power struggle in the Indo-Pacific — with Washington trying to create a unified front of regional allies to balance against Beijing.

Lamenting the political impasse in which America has been unable to get ambassadors to key countries like Korea and China, Schell pointed out that every country has a version of Korea's problems. "Korea just happens to be closer," he added. If China continues to be punitive and further separates itself from the liberal democratic world like oil and water, what would Korea do? Watch the full interview with one of the world's greatest living sinologists to find out. See related news articles in the [JoongAng Daily](#) and the [Asia Times](#).

About the Participants



Orville Schell is the Arthur Ross Director of the Center on U.S.-China Relations at Asia Society in New York. He is a former professor and Dean at the University of California, Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism. Schell is the author of fifteen books, ten of them about China, and a contributor to numerous edited volumes. His most recent books are: *Wealth and Power, China's Long March to the 21st Century; Virtual Tibet; The China Reader: The Reform Years*; and *Mandate of Heaven: The Legacy of Tiananmen Square and the Next Generation of China's Leaders*. He has written widely for many magazines and newspapers, including *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New Yorker*, *Time*, *The New Republic*, *Harpers*, *The Nation*, *The New York Review of Books*, *Wired*, *Foreign Affairs*, the *China Quarterly*, and *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Schell was born in New York City, graduated Magna Cum Laude from Harvard University in Far Eastern History, was an exchange student at National Taiwan University in the 1960s and earned a Ph.D. (Abd) at the University of California, Berkeley in Chinese History. He worked for the Ford Foundation in Indonesia, covered the war in Indochina as a journalist, and has traveled widely in China since the mid-70s.

He is a Fellow at the Weatherhead East Asian Institute at Columbia University, a Senior Fellow at the Annenberg School of Communications at USC, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Schell is also the recipient of many prizes and fellowships, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Overseas Press Club Award, and the Harvard-Stanford Shorenstein Prize in Asian Journalism.

In the News: From Asia Society Policy Institute

미국은 TPP로 돌아가야만 한다



STR/AFP/Getty Images

2021년 9월 10일, 웬디 커틀러(Wendy Cutler)

본문은 아시아사사이어티 정책연구소(Asia Society Policy Institute; ASPi)의 부소장이자 前 한미 자유무역협정 협상 미국 측 수석대표인 웬디 커틀러가 [포린 어페어즈\(Foreign Affairs\)](#)에 기고한 글의 일부를 발췌한 것이다.

조 바이든 미국 대통령은 전임자의 독단적인 외교 정책 접근법을 타파해왔다. 미국은 다시 세계보건기구(WHO) 회원국이 되었으며, 파리기후변화협약에도 재가입하였다. 또한 바이든은 이란과의 핵 협상을 재개하기 위해 노력하고 있다. 그러나 그가 아직 되살리려 시도하지 않은 대외 경제 정책이 있는데, 바로 미국의 환태평양경제동반자협정(TPP) 재가입이다. 2017년, 트럼프 전 대통령은 미국을 베트남에서 호주까지 전 세계 GDP의 약 40%를 차지하는 TPP에서 탈퇴시켰다. 반면 남은 11개 회원국들은 TPP를 포괄적·점진적 환태평양경제동반자협정(CPTPP)로 재탄생시키는 데 합의하였다. 회원국들은 본 협정을 통해 관세를 성공적으로 축소시켰으며, 지적 재산권 보호에서 국책사업을 아우르는 분야까지 시장에 기초할 것을 강력히 요구하는 조항들을 마련하였다.

미국이 이 협정에 재가입을 시도한다면 국내외적인 난관에 부딪히게 될 것이다. 그럼에도 불구하고, 바이든 행정부는 CPTPP로 돌아가기 위한 노력이 필요하다. 경제 문제뿐만 아니라 부상하는 중국과의 경쟁 속에서 미국의 국제적 영향력에 대한 위험부담 또한 만만치 않기 때문일 것이다.

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웬디 커틀러가 말하는 중국, 대만, 그리고 CPTPP

2021년 10월 5일

본문은 더 디플로맷(The Diplomat)에서 진행한 아시아소사이어티 정책연구소(Asia Society Policy Institute; ASPI)의 부소장이자 前 한미 자유무역협정 협상 미국 측 수석대표인 웬디 커틀러의 인터뷰 일부를 발췌한 내용이다.

중국은 9월 16일 관세 인하를 넘어 높은 기준을 요구하는 11개 회원국 간의 통상 조약인 환태평양경제동반자협정(이하 CPTPP)에 가입 신청서를 공식적으로 제출했다. 일주일 후인 9월 23일, 대만도 잇따라 CPTPP 가입을 신청했다.



Kevin Frayer/Getty Images

더 디플로맷의 새넌 티에지(Shannon Tiezzi)는 아시아 소사이어티 정책 연구소(ASPI)의 부사장인 웬디 커틀러(Wendy Cutler)와 중국과 대만의 CPTPP 가입 신청이 갖는 의미에 대한 인터뷰를 진행했다. 커틀러는 미국 무역대표부 대표보를 역임했고, 여러 양자, 지역, 다자 무역 이니셔티브 중 기존 TPP 협상에 참여한 바 있다.

먼저 기술적인 질문입니다. 중국이 CPTPP에 가입 신청서를 낸 것은 실질적으로 어떤 의미를 갖습니까? 또한 신청 이후에는 어떤 절차를 밟게 됩니까?

중국은 9월 16일 CPTPP 가입 신청서를 제출함으로써 현재 11개 회원국으로 이루어진 무역 협정에 가입 의사를 공식적으로 표명했습니다. 그러나 회원 자격을 곧바로 얻게 되는 것은 아닙니다. 이는 현 CPTPP 참여국들의 판단에 달려 있으며, 신청 국가가 협정에서 요구하는 높은 기준을 준수하고 시장 접근 기회를 제공하는 데 적극적인지에 대한 평가가 이루어집니다. 예비 후보자가 공식적인 신청을 완료하면, 2019년 1월 CPTPP 회원국들이 규정해 둔 심사 절차가 시작됩니다. 신청서 수령 후, 각 회원국은 내부 토론을 통해 다른 회원국들과 상의하여 자국의 입장을 결정합니다. 또한 회원국들은 중국에 대한 심의를 진행하는 과정에서 추가적인 정보를 얻기 위해 중국에 직접 연락할 수 있습니다.

CPTPP 회원국들은 가장 먼저 실제 가입 협상을 시작할 공식 실무협의체(Working Group)를 구성할지에 대한 여부를 결정하게 됩니다. 이 결정은 협정을 발효시킨 8개 CPTPP 회원국들의 합의에 의해 이루어집니다. 나머지 3개 회원국(말레이시아, 칠레, 브루나이)은 자국의 영향력을 행사하기 위해 협정 비준을 가속화할 수 있습니다. 8개국 중 하나라도 반대하는 경우 실무협의체가 구성될 수 없습니다. 실무협의체는 시간 제한 없이 심의가 가능하나, 신청국은 현재 또는 미래에 어떻게 CPTPP 규정을 적용할 것인지에 대한 계획을 미리 설명하고 시장 접근 기회를 제공할 의무를 갖습니다. 후보자와의 협상이 완료되면, 실무협의체는 모든 CPTPP 회원국으로 구성된 CPTPP 위원회에 보고서를 제출해야 합니다. 국가를 공식 회원국으로 받아들일지에 대한 최종 결정은 협정을 비준하고 발효한 국가들의 합의에 의해 내려집니다.

중국의 신청은 2월 영국의 가입 신청에 이어 두 번째 공식 CPTPP 가입 신청이라는 의미를 갖습니다. 따라서 참고할 만한 선례가 거의 없습니다. 영국 가입에 대한 실무협의체는 6월에 설립되었으며 가입 협상이 여전히 진행 중입니다.

CPTPP는 TPP였을 때부터 "높은 기준"의 무역 협정으로 구상되었습니다. 이를 감안할 때 중국이 이러한 기준을 충족하고 실제로 CPTPP에 합류하게 될 가능성은 얼마나 됩니까? 중국의 CPTPP 발표는 특히 기술 산업 분야에서 나타나는 새로운 규정의 물결과 함께 이루어졌습니다. 중국의 CPTPP 적용이 시진핑의 광범위한 경제 정책에 어떻게 부합한다고 보십니까?

이 질문은 CPTPP 회원들이 숙고해야 할 핵심적인 문제입니다. 중국은 수년에 걸쳐 서비스 시장 자유화, 투자 제한 해제, 지적 재산권 보호 및 집행 체제 강화를 포함하여 특정 영역에서는 CPTPP 의무에 부합하는 방향으로 나아가는 모습을 보였습니다. 그러나 국유 기업, 노동권, 환경 보호, 전자 상거래를 포함한 많은 다른 문제에서 CPTPP의 높은 기준과 중국의 무역 관행 사이에는 큰 격차가 남아 있습니다.

더욱이, 중국은 경제에 대한 국가의 참여 증가, 데이터의 사용, 저장 및 흐름에 대한 제한 증가, 정치적 우려에서 비롯된 자의적인 무역 제한, 정부 조달 우선 정책의 이행 및 기존 무역 약속에 대한 의심스러운 이행 실적을 비롯한 많은 측면에서 CPTPP의 규정과 정신에서 멀어지고 있습니다.

[원문페이지 바로가기](#)

[The Diplomat 페이지 바로가기](#)

바이든-시진핑 정상회담에 대한 이해

2021년 11월 17일

개요: 11월 15일 월요일, **조 바이든(Joe Biden)** 미국 대통령과 **시진핑(習近平)** 중국 국가주석은 현재 미중 관계가 바이든 대통령이 “고도의 경쟁”이라 언급했을 정도로 긴장이 고조된 상황에서 새로운 국면으로 나아가기 위하여 3시간 가량의 화상회담을 통해 처음으로 얼굴을 마주했다.

배경: 트럼프 시대에 대부분의 의사소통 채널이 끝내 단절되었고, 그 이후 바이든 행정부가 중국과 실질적인 대화를 시도할 때마다 극적인 비난과 좌절로 끝났다. 최고위급 수준의 회담을 진행하기로 한 이번 결정은 미중 관계에 내재된 위험에 대한 깊은 우려를 반영했다. 양국의 정상은 더 심각한 위기나 분쟁을 미연에 방지하는 데 관심을 두고 있다. 특히 내년에는 두 정상 모두 국내 정치적 도전에 직면해 있다. 이는 트럼프 대통령과 시진핑 주석이 2019년 6월 오사카에서 열린 G20 정상회의에 참석한 이후, 양국이 갖는 첫 '정상회담'이다.



2021년 11월 15일 조 바이든 미국 대통령이 워싱턴 백악관 루즈벨트룸에서 화상회담을 통해 시진핑 중국 국가주석을 만나고 있다 (Mandel Ngan/AFP/Getty Images)

회담 내용: 양국 정상은 대만, 인권, 무역 등 우려되는 문제에 관해 설득력 있는 정도로 보기는 어려우나 최소한 확고한 입장으로 회담의 포문을 열었다. 그러나 기후 변화, 세계 보건안보, 에너지 가격 안정화, 글로벌 경기 회복과 같은 공통의 관심 분야에서는 조정 가능성이 비교적 큰 것으로 나타났다.

회담 결과: 이번 회담이 실질적인 돌파구 마련을 목표로 했다고 보기는 어렵다. 대신 다른 중요한 목표를 달성했다. 바로 과열된 미중 경쟁을 관리하고 지난 4년 동안 극도로 악화된 관계를 안정시키기 위한 프로세스의 정립이다. 회담의 주요 성과는 미중 관계가 위기와 의도치 않은 충돌 발생 가능성으로 탈선하지 않도록 하는 데 필요한 "가드레일"을 설정하기로 합의한 데 있다.

다음 단계에서는 중대한 이슈들에 초점을 맞춘 외교; 군사; 경제 채널을 통해 소통을 여는 것이 중요하다. 이는 무역과 핵 안정성과 같은 중대한 의견 불일치가 있는 분야들을 관리하고, 비확산과 같은 새로운 협력 분야들을 탐색하고, 기후 변화에 대한 최근의 공동 선언을 추진하는 것을 포함한다.

행간읽기: 회담을 통해 양국의 외교적 이견을 줄일 수 있었지만, 이와 같은 진전을 이어가기 위해서는 지속적인 노력이 필요하다. 이는 물론 치열한 전략적 경쟁이 계속되고 정치적 싸움으로 인해 워싱턴에서 중국과의 '대화'와 '협력'이 저열한 단어로 전략한 상황에서 쉽지 않은 여정이 될 것이다. 바이든 행정부의 관료들은 친중(親中) 이미지를 갖는 것을 꺼리며, 중국의 의도를 의심하고 있다. 실제 단계 진전은 조심스럽고, 더디게 진행되며, 그 과정은 취약할 가능성이 높다. 그러나 바이든이 2월 동계올림픽을 위해 베이징을 방문할 것이라고 기대하지 않는 편이 좋겠다.

지켜봐야 할 사항: 다음과 같은 영역에 대한 양측의 긴밀한 협력이 무르익은 것으로 보인다:

- **에너지:** 양측은 에너지 공급과 가격 안정을 중요시했다. 추가 조율을 위한 미국과 중국의 에너지 관리들 간의 협조를 기대한다.
- **무역:** 관세에 대한 언급은 전혀 없었고, 이에 관세 철폐를 위해 로비를 했던 미국 기업 단체들은 실망했다. 그러나 회담에 경제 고위 관리인재닛 옐런(Janet Yellen)과 리우허(劉鶴)가 참석했다는 점은 관련 문제에 대한 추가적인 개선 가능성을 시사한다.
- **핵:** 회담 후 제이크 쉐리번(Jake Sullivan) 백악관 국가안보보좌관은 두 정상이 "전략적 안정"에 관한 대화를 진행하는 데 합의했다고 밝혔다. 최근 중국의 핵무기 증강은 미군의 주요 관심 분야로 떠올랐다.
- **비확산:** 두 정상은 11월 29일 비엔나에서 열릴 예정인 회담에서 이란 핵합의 재개 협상을 위한 "이해관계 조정"에 대해 논의했다.

케빈 러드, 다니엘 러셀, 웬디 커틀러가 함께한 바이든-시진핑 정상회담에 대한 보다 심도 있는 ASPI 의 해석 [영상](#) 확인하기
[원문페이지 바로가기](#)

남중국해의 현주소와 동남아의 대응방안



미 해군 7함대 소속 니미츠 항공모함단이 남중국해에서 '항행의 자유' 작전을 실시하고 있다. 타이콘데로가급 이지스순양함 초신함(USS Chosin), 미사일 구축함 샘슨함(USS Sampson), 그리고 유도미사일 구축함으로 알려진 핑크니함(USS Pinckney) 등이 니미츠 항공모함(USS Nimitz)을 호위하며 작전을 수행하는 모습이다. (Stocktrek Images / Getty Images)

2021년 12월 15일

개요: 지난 5년간 남중국해의 정세는 당장이라도 끓어오를 듯한 긴장상태가 지속되어 왔다. 제해권을 두고 일어나는 역내 국가들간에 충돌은 법 집행기관과 군경 등의 정부기관부터 민병대와 민간 어업자들에 이르기까지 다양한 이해관계자들을 총 집합시켰다. 이러한 긴장상태는 대치와 기싸움을 넘어서 물대포와 물리적 충돌로 인한 선박의 침몰 등을 야기하기에 이른다. 남중국해의 수역 분쟁은 제공권을 둘러싼 위협과 지속되는 사이버전(戰)에 의해 그 긴장이 더욱 고조되는 상황이다. 남중국해의 수역 분쟁은 서로 상충되는 영유권의 6개국가를 포함하고 있지만, 그 중심에는 중국의 강력한 존재감과 물리적, 그리고 다방면에 걸쳐서 증가하고 있는 베이징의 강압적인 태도가 이웃국가들에게 주는 도전적 과제로서 자리잡고 있다.

본 보고서는 역내 전문가들의 관점을 통해 브루나이, 말레이시아, 필리핀, 베트남 등 남중국해 분쟁의 4개국의 입장과 대응방안을 모색한다. 또한, 이해관계자로서 인도네시아의 입장에 대한 검토도 포함되어 있다. 인도네시아는 영유권 주장을 내세우지 않지만 북나투나해를 둘러싼 배타적 경제수역 일부가 중국의 구단선(九段線)과 겹치면서 영유권 분쟁에 준하는 갈등과 대립이 첨예하게 빚어지고 있다.

이번 보고서의 소평론들은 남중국해 분쟁 관리 및 분쟁 해결에 대한 각국의 접근 방식 뿐만 아니라 그들의 기본적인 국가정책을 평가한다. 또한, 저자들은 각자 맡은 전문분야에 대해 다음과 같은 사항들을 분석한다.

- 자국 내 국내정치적 수용력과 제약
- 주요위험요소 및 최선의 정책 결과
- 분쟁 완화 및 관리를 위한 ASEAN의 역할
- 역외 이해관계자들이 미치는 영향

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Mobile Phone Verification: Can I Get Your Number?

MOBILE PHONE VERIFICATION: CAN I GET YOUR NUMBER?

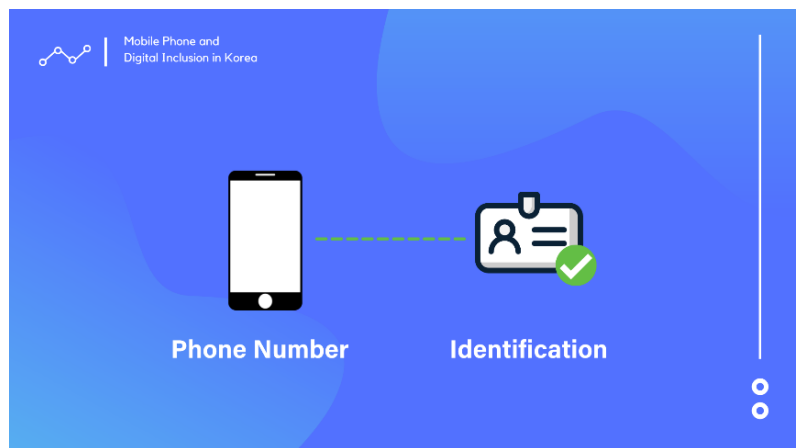
Digital Inclusion in Korea



By Matthew Fennel, Senior Contributor

September 29, 2021 — For many years, a cell phone number served as a means for friends, family, or companies to connect through call or text. More recently, the phone number has developed into a powerful tool for identifying people on internet communication platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, or Instagram. Registering for many online services now [requires](#) a verification code, sent via SMS, and entered into a webpage or application. While this online security process is becoming standard worldwide, accessing online services in Korea is not as easy as simply having a phone number. The phone number must be registered in your name, verified by having a monthly contract, and signed up for using a [Resident Registration Number](#) (RRN). As a result, using many digital services in Korea can be [almost impossible](#) for those unable to access, or maintain, a monthly phone plan, predominantly foreigners or Koreans living abroad.

To understand this further, we have to go back to the start of Internet real-name verification in Korea. In 2004, in response to concerns that unregulated online speech would impact election results, the Korean government [amended](#) the Public Official Election Act. This law change meant that citizens had to verify their identity using a Resident Registration Number (RRN) before posting on election-related websites. In 2007, following calls for more stringent restrictions on digital anonymity to prevent online bullying and slander, real-name verification was [extended](#) to cover all websites with more than 100,000 daily users. Using a RRN became standard for people in Korea when accessing online banking or shopping services. However, following the Personal Information Protection Act of 2011, the Internet real-name system, initially verified by name and RRN, was replaced by mobile phone authentication. Crucially, mobile authentication is only possible once a person uses their RRN to sign up for a monthly contract with one of the big domestic telecommunication companies.



Despite the seemingly good intentions of mobile verification in safeguarding people in the new digital world, the system inadvertently made many digital services inaccessible to those who cannot sign up for a domestic monthly cellphone contract. First, a monthly contract requires a Resident Registration Number, limiting people in Korea who do not have one, such as tourists, short-term visitors, or members of the diplomatic community. Therefore, it is common for many foreigners living in Korea to have their cell phone plans in the name of their boss, company, or a Korean friend. Additionally, monthly contracts are a financial commitment, often for at least one year, deterring the financially disadvantaged or Koreans living abroad unwilling to maintain monthly tariffs. So, for many foreigners or overseas Koreans without a monthly cell phone plan in their name, something as straightforward as buying a shirt online in Korea can be very challenging due to the shackles of mobile phone verification.

What are some other consequences of not having access to mobile phone authentication in Korea in 2021? At a basic level, using food delivery apps, shopping online, or signing up for local websites such as Daum or Naver is extremely difficult. Ordering a Smart Request, Venti, or Blue Kakao taxi is off limits as this demands registering a bank card, something only possible after a phone verification. Also, participating in any online forum or discussion board is forbidden as this too requires authentication. At a higher level, accessing government websites such as the National Pension Service, National Tax Service, or National Health Insurance is tough without a monthly contract plan. Registering online for a Covid vaccination is impossible without a Naver Certificate, Kakao Certificate, Pass Certificate, or Financial Certificate. And despite the importance of using [QR codes](#) for tracking people in the fight against the spread of Covid-19, a monthly contract tariff is needed to generate such a code.



Life in South Korea, especially during the pandemic, has become increasingly reliant on online platforms for communicating, shopping, or banking. Digital services permeate all parts of daily life, from presenting a QR code when going for a morning coffee to using apps when ordering groceries for home delivery. Yet, despite this shift towards an online society, mobile phone verification is excluding and isolating certain groups within the community. This exclusion is especially highlighted for those foreigners quarantining for two weeks upon arrival in Korea. The "[Quarantine in South Korea](#)" Facebook page has many cries for help in ordering food and other essentials because of the restrictions of not having a domestic phone number. Similarly, a "Koreans in Moscow" Kakao chat room has people complaining that they can no longer use many Korean online services as they have paused their monthly contract.

Although the number of foreigners in Korea and the number of Koreans living abroad is increasing, non-face-to-face personal authentication is a barrier that appears very difficult to overcome. To reverse this increasing [digital divide](#), the government and relevant tech companies must develop solutions to address mobile phone verification restrictions.

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Why the Korean Entertainment Scene is Flooded with Audition Programs?

By Nemo Kim, Contributing Writer

October 7, 2022 — As school wraps up, Mary, a 12-year-old in Seattle, climbs into the car belonging to her Korean-American classmate's mother. It is the once-a-week afternoon set aside for Mary and her friend Nayeon to watch the new episode of LOUD, the latest offering from the Korean TV channel SBS to devotees of Korean audition programs worldwide.

They sit watching the TV behind a table full of snacks prepared by Nayeon's mom, but the girls are oblivious to them.

"I cannot believe Dong Yeon didn't make it to the next round; I thought the judges were supposed to be professional," laments Mary. Nayeon adds her comments, "The whole thing is being turned into a promo for their companies. Maybe we should complain to the show's producers."



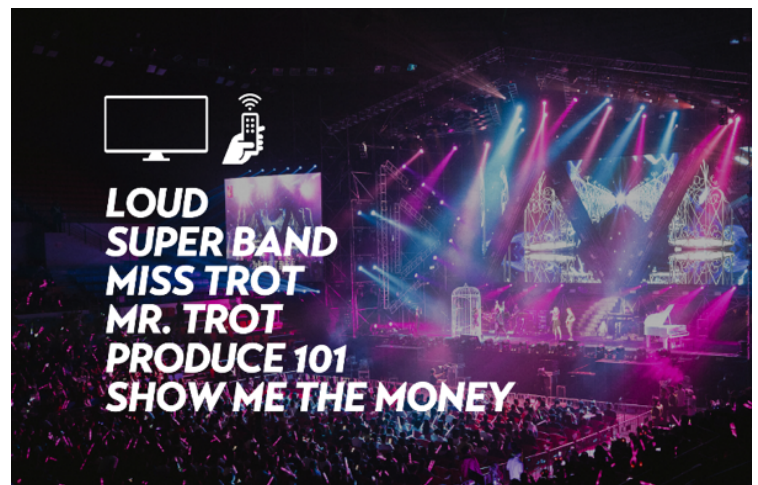
Over in Seoul, Sung (not his real name), an award-winning film director, has been trying to finish the script for his next movie when he realizes he forgot to cast his twice-daily vote for [Super Band Two](#) (JTBC), an audition show for rock bands.

Although TV talent shows may have originated in Europe, Expedition Robinson, a Swedish TV series created in 1997 by the British TV producer Charlie Parsons, is said to be the world's first music competition, the genre is currently at the center of what is hot in K-entertainment.

Audition-based programs have existed in South Korea for many decades. However, two years ago, TV Choson's [Miss Trot](#) reignited a passion for the talent show, making the genre once again fashionable, even among the most skeptical of audiences. (Trot is a century-old Korean popular music genre known for its repetitive rhythm, vocal inflections, and lyrics about love and heartbreak.)

Despite airing on a weekday, Miss Trot topped viewing ratings, ran for two seasons, and became so successful that TV Choson commissioned a male version of the same show, [Mr. Trot](#). "As Audiences follow contestants from round one throughout the series, they feel they play a part in the successes of the winners," says Si-Moo Kim, a culture and film critic, "This means there is a strong sense of loyalty among fans." The two series have been credited for bringing about a renewed interest in trot music among younger generations.

However, TV talent shows are no stranger to controversy. Early last year, the filming of the final round of Mr. Trot was postponed due to the outbreak of Covid-19. When the program finally got underway without an audience, the winners could not be announced during the show as servers broke down due to the sheer number of votes flooding in (The number of calls was over 7.7 million).



In 2019, Mnet's [Produce 101](#) series, intended to create Kpop groups based on audience feedback, was at the heart of a massive vote manipulation scandal, with 272 viewers filing a lawsuit against Mnet. Eventually, ten Mnet executives and agency representatives were [charged and arrested](#) for obstruction of business, fraud, and bribery. On the other hand, Mnet's other audition series, the hip-hop-themed [Show Me The Money](#), is still going strong after almost ten years.

The popularity of audition programs is not purely based on the successes of the contestants. Audition programs also serve as gateways into different music genres while providing a weekly dose of thrilling drama. "They're like a reality show, and music program rolled into one single genre. Also, the audience participation aspect makes viewers feel they're part of the series, almost as in a multi-player computer game," says Si-Moo Kim.

Meanwhile, back in Seattle, the girls, having watched the episode, were busy working out what to say to the producers of LOUD, snacks still untouched.

Squid Game: What Nostalgic Games Will We See in Season 2?

By Matthew Fennell, Senior Contributor

October 27, 2021 — Since being released on September 17th, [Squid Game](#) has become one of the most talked-about shows of 2021. With over 40 billion hashtag views on TikTok, memes going viral, and its chilling soundtrack being downloaded in droves, the Korean survival drama could well turn out to be [Netflix's most-watched show](#) ever.

While the drama focuses on 456 desperate individuals playing brutal survival games to win 45.6 billion won (\$39 million), Squid Game also evokes nostalgia and melancholy from Koreans reminiscing childhood pastimes. The games played by the characters have been enjoyed for many years on the peninsula, and the show is promoting a revival of these increasingly forgotten playground activities. Although Squid Game's popularity has led to the worldwide exposure of [Red Light-Green Light](#), Paper Flip, and Honeycomb Candy, Asia Society Korea will second-guess what other Korean games we could see in potential future series.

Our first prediction of what contestants may play in season two is "Why did you come to my house?" (우리집에 왜 왔니). During a scene in Squid Game where the contestants themselves try to predict what they may play next, Gi-Hun suggests it could be "Why did you come to my house?". [Mentioned](#) by Squid Game director Hwang Dong-hyuk as one of his favorite pastimes, we feel there is a very good chance that it will make an appearance in season two. The game involves two teams singing lines from a song, taking turns attacking and defending, attempting to steal opposing players. First, the defending team walks forward and sings, "Why did you come to my house, come to my house, come to my house?" The attacking team replies by singing, "To pick the flowers, pick the flowers, pick the flowers." The defending team asks the attacking team, "Which flower, flower, flower," and the attacking team names a team player they want to try to steal. The named player will play rock paper scissors with the person opposite, and if they lose, they will join the attacking team. The first team to capture all of the players is the winner.

Another game that we feel may appear in future episodes is [Spinning Top \(팽이치기\)](#), where wooden tops are wound up with string and let go. To win the game, players should hit the tops with a thick leather strap to keep them spinning for as long as possible. Although there is no official record of when the game originated, it is believed to have been popular during the [Three Kingdoms Period](#) in Korea. Although the wooden tops are now professionally made, before the 1970s, it was common for villagers to use homemade tops in competition. Also [mentioned](#) in director Hwang's interview as one of his favorite pastimes, the game is often played in winter on a frozen river, pond, or neighborhood alley. As with many Korean games, there are regional variations for the name for the top and how the game is played.



Spinning Top

Our third prediction is [Korean hopscotch \(사방치기\)](#), where two teams compete to "take" as many of the eight spaces on the grid as possible. Players throw a stick or pebble into the first number on the grid, then hop through the other spaces before picking up the stick on the way back through the board. This process is then repeated for numbers 2-8 until the team reaches the final stage. Here one player should hop through the grid, throw the stick over his or her shoulder, and whatever number it lands in, if it is successfully picked up on the way back, that space is given to that team. Whichever team has the most spaces at the end of the game is the winner.



Gonggi

Our fourth and final prediction of what contestants may play in season two is [Gonggi \(공기\)](#), a popular Korean children's game where several small pebbles are thrown into the air and caught. Although the game's origin is unknown, it was mentioned in a book written during the reign of King Heonjong (1834-1849) almost 200 years ago. Needing a flat surface, Gonggi can be played individually or with players competing against each other and includes five stages. Players start by dropping five Gonggi stones before picking up one stone, throwing it into the air, and at the same time picking up another stone. If the player successfully picks up all five pieces, they can move on to stages 2-4, which involves picking up two, then three, then four stones, respectively, while the first stone is in the air. If these stages are completed without dropping any stones, a player can move to the final round, throwing the stones in the air and catching them on the back of their

hand. These stones on the back of the hand are also tossed upwards, and the number caught corresponds to the number of points awarded.

As with all the childhood pastimes we saw in Squid Game, our game predictions are simple and easy to understand. With the show attracting well [over 100 million viewers](#) worldwide, a second season is inevitable. Should that happen, it will be interesting to see how many of our predictions are proven to be correct.

From “Clean Diesel” to “No Diesel”: South Korea’s Urea Crisis Explained

By Matthew Fennell, Senior Contributor

November 25, 2021 — Not many people may have heard of urea, the key ingredient in agricultural fertilizer and diesel exhaust fluid, until recently. Yet, this previously unknown chemical is dominating the headlines in Korea as its urea shortage threatened to disrupt supply chains and businesses up and down the country. Put simply, without urea, two million diesel cars and two million diesel trucks would grind to a halt, impacting everything from cargo deliveries to bus and emergency vehicle operations. Thankfully, corporate leaders from Lotte Corporation, POSCO, and LX Holdings have used their personal connections to help the government secure much needed supplies of “urea water” to prevent a full blow crisis for now. For example, Lotte Group Chairman Shin Dong-bin helped source 19,000 tons of urea through his network in Vietnam, [Saudi Arabia](#), and Indonesia. While trucks and vans can continue with deliveries in the immediate future, the situation has still exposed Korea’s heavy reliance on diesel vehicles.

Urea is added to many diesel vehicles to convert dangerous nitrogen oxides into harmless nitrogen gas and water. Drivers purchase this urea solution from fuel stations and car accessory shops, and if a vehicle runs dry, sensors limit horsepower and eventually stop the engine from starting. Therefore, it is no surprise the Korean government is preventing the resale of urea, the purchase amount for individuals and businesses is rationed, and truck drivers are queuing up for hours panic-buying this essential liquid. However, could this crisis have been averted if Korea had made greater efforts to reduce its ten million diesel vehicles currently in operation? And why is diesel still so commonly used in the country?

To understand the popularity of diesel cars in Korea, we should go back to the “[clean diesel](#)” policy implemented by the Lee Myung-bak government, which promoted the vehicles as eco-friendly and provided tax benefits to those driving them. Along with tax benefits, other incentives were given to consumers, such as discounts on parking and reduced toll fees. The argument was that diesel vehicles adhering to the Euro 5 standards emitted less CO₂ than gasoline cars, and as such, were not only cost-effective but also environmentally friendly. This “clean diesel” movement led to increased use in the freight industry and an explosion in sales of diesel cars, with the number registered at around 10 million in 2015. This popularity was evident in [imported diesel car sales](#), which grew from less than 30% in 2010 to 68% in 2015. Diesel had established a dominant position in the market in Korea.

However, in 2015, diesel was in the spotlight for the wrong reasons due to [Volkswagen’s emissions scandal](#) and subsequent doubts if diesel could be “clean.” In response to public outcry and criticism, Korea [reversed](#) its previous support for diesel cars because of rising concerns that the vehicles increased pollution levels, particularly those related to fine particle emissions. In 2018, the government abandoned its “clean diesel” policy, finally removing most of the financial benefits and tax subsidies. “Diesel gate” helped reverse the diesel car boom, and the proportion of imported diesel car sales fell to 58.72 percent in 2016, 47.16 percent in 2017, 41 percent in 2018, 30.33 percent in 2019, and last year back to below 2010 levels.



Despite the downtrend in diesel vehicle sales, the recent urea crisis has reignited the argument that Korea still has an overreliance on the fuel and is suffering a hangover from the pre-2015 boom. For example, in 2020, [64.6 percent](#) of vehicles used by the Seoul municipal government, district offices, and city-affiliated public organizations were diesel. Furthermore, according to the transport ministry, about 83 percent of Korea’s 422,761 cargo trucks were also powered by diesel last year. Although current president Moon Jae-in [announced](#) that Korea aims to have 1.13 million electric vehicles and 200,000 hydrogen cars on the road by 2025, phasing out diesel is no small task for a country where cargo trucks play such an important role.

There have been recent attempts to implement “[no diesel](#)” initiatives. For example, in July last year, Seoul banned the purchase of new diesel cars for public use. The city will also remove all diesel vehicles from public transportation, including taxis, airport buses, and city tour buses by 2025. Then there are plans to increase electric charging stations from the current 1,090 to 4,000 by 2035. Around 4,000 electric and hydrogen-powered buses will be [put into circulation](#) over the next four years, and in January this year, 27 diesel buses were replaced by battery-electric vehicles on the symbolic “Seoul Green Circulation” bus line. Yet, environmentalists argue these policies are not enough and the government should be doing more.

In the past ten years, Korea has gone from experiencing a boom in the number of diesel cars on the road to now the headache of having to remove these vehicles from circulation. Although the shift in attitudes away from diesel started in 2015, with policies following suit in 2018, the current urea crisis has again highlighted government shortcomings in being over-reliant on vehicles that not only require a chemical Korea does not produce, but that are also significantly damaging to the environment.

Korea's Biometric Data Dilemma

By Matthew Fennell, Senior Contributor

December 17, 2021— Using biometric data is often the most secure and convenient way to unlock a device and access various accounts for those who own a smartphone. Fingerprint readers, iris scans, and facial recognition are fast becoming the preferred way for individuals to log in to their bank accounts, make online payments, or verify their identity. Yet, if biometrics are leaked, a complete recovery is impossible due to the uniqueness of the data. If your credit card number is stolen, you get a new card and cancel the old information. But how do you replace a fingerprint or facial features?



As biometric data is highly sensitive, it is no surprise that people in Korea were unhappy with the government recently sharing around [170 million photographs](#) of passengers traveling through Incheon Airport with private companies. The Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Science and Technology transferred facial images of both Koreans and foreigners, along with their nationality, gender, and age, to private businesses for AI technology research. In Korea, this biometric data is crucial for the country's heavy investment in the development and commercialization of artificial intelligence, and in this industry, the more data, the better. With Korea utilizing its vast CCTV network to harvest biometrics, how concerned should we be that our data may fall into the wrong hands?

Korea's capability to collect biometric data is partly due to the number of closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras in public places. With around 100,000 new cameras installed each year, over [1.3 million government](#) cameras are now operating across the country. Compare this to the 565,723 working cameras in 2013, and there has been a 130% increase in CCTV coverage over the past seven years. Of all the government cameras in Korea, almost half were installed to protect property and avert fire, around 45% were fitted for crime prevention, and the remaining 5% were used for traffic enforcement and other data collection purposes. While many citizens support the use of CCTV, there are concerns about the increased harvesting of biometrics, especially considering the Incheon Airport data was given to companies for "AI learning" without consent.

So, just how easy is it for companies to gain access to biometric data? According to Dong Hoon Lee, a researcher at AI company [Ziovision](#), strict legal regulations mean that private companies in Korea are extremely limited in compiling biometric data. Furthermore, research using biometrics is managed and controlled by government agencies or institutions like the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Government and privately collected data, such as that gathered from [ADT's](#) surveillance cameras, are strictly supervised, well protected, and not given to private companies without special legal authorization.

However, Lee also agrees that citizens should recognize the threat of data leakages and privacy infringement. Facial recognition data is essential to protect as it contains distinctively sensitive information. In fact, many US companies and research institutes have [declared](#) that they will no longer carry out facial recognition activities in response to data protection concerns. Despite worries about invasions of privacy, Korea is [expanding](#) its ventures into AI and applying the technology to real-life scenarios. For example, in January, a nationally-funded project will see Bucheon, a satellite city to Seoul, use artificial intelligence (AI), facial recognition, and thousands of closed-circuit video cameras to [track](#) the movement of those infected with coronavirus. The system will use AI algorithms and facial recognition technology to analyze images gathered by more than [10,820](#) security cameras. Opponents have [expressed](#) concerns that the government will keep and exploit such data beyond the battle against Covid-19.



As Korea increases AI-powered facial recognition for many other uses, from detecting child abuse at daycare centers to providing police protection, the threat of having this data fall into the wrong hands also increases. Although the risk of biometric identity theft is still relatively small, recent cases in Korea highlight that it is still a possibility. Just last month, criminals stole the fingerprints from an ID card of a landowner, used a silicone expert to replicate his print, and successfully carried out an illegal sale of a property. The threat of "spoofing," the practice of fooling a biometric security system using stolen or copied biometric information, is something that citizens in Korea may well have to get used to soon.

There is no doubt that AI technology can help prevent crimes, increase safety, reduce unnecessary human interaction, and support medical treatments. Korea has recently launched several initiatives, for example, the [National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence](#), to advance Korea in AI, and biometric data collection is a central part of the process. Yet, as we start seeing actual crimes associated with biometric identity theft, the Korean government must take security threats more seriously and implement more robust protection to keep data safe.

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