

Asia Society Korea Center

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Asia Society Korea Center is proud to welcome our new 2014 members: KB Investment & Securities, KDB DAEWOO Securities Co., Ltd., KIM & CHANG, Lee & Ko, Shinhan Bank and SHIN & KIM.

Special Lecture

Political Unrest and Investment Opportunities in the Middle East



November 7, 2014 - The Asia Society Korea Center hosted Mr. **Saad Al-Ali**, the Editor in Chief of KUNA (Kuwait News Agency) who gave a lecture on issues pertaining to the Middle East. As an accomplished journalist and lecturer on Middle East policies, Mr. Saad Al-Ali provided insights into "Business and Investment Opportunities in Light of the Changes and its Political Stability in the Eyes of Foreign Investors."

With his extensive experience in the Middle East and beyond, Mr. Al-Ali was able to focus on both the socio- and geo-political issues in the region in order to advise Korean companies who are considering investing in the Middle East. (continued on page 5)

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Monthly Luncheon Series

Bad Decisions, Bad Consequences: The Korean Issue in the New Century



Bob Carlin, Visiting Scholar, Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University

July 15, 2014 - Korea analyst and author **Bob Carlin** was guest speaker at the Asia Society's July monthly luncheon to discuss the re-release of what many consider the foremost book on modern Korea, Don Oberdorfer's *The Two Koreas*. Carlin wrote the updated forward, bringing this arresting publication, loved by university students, business leaders and public alike, to a new generation of readers. Carlin discussed the changes on the Korean Peninsula since the publication's initial release, the publication's continued relevance, and the challenges he had to overcome in updating the book.

Carlin started by saying that many people always ask the question of where we are going with North Korea when really we should be asking ourselves how did we get into this situation in the first place. To answer this question Carlin had to take apart the first edition of the book down to its blueprint to get a deep understanding of what Don Oberdorfer was portraying through his work. One of the biggest logistical challenges Carlin faced was dealing with the length of the revised book after being told by the publisher that it was to be no more than 10% longer than the original.

Carlin explained how his book picks up from where Oberdorfer left off in December 2000 when US-DPRK relations were looking up. Kim Jong Il's second in command had been to Washington for talks and Madeline Albright had been to Pyongyang to set about a framework for cooperation. Fast forward 3 months and following the election of the Bush administration, relations had deteriorated so fast that the whole framework had been totally destroyed.

Carlin then proceeded to talk about missed opportunities for progress in 2009 during the Obama and Lee Myung Bak administrations. The first was in August when Bill Clinton went to rescue 2 American journalists who had been held in DPRK for trespassing. Kim Jong Il had wanted to engage Clinton to get US-DPRK relations back on track but Clinton had been ordered by the administration to have no communication at all other than bringing the girls home. In October of the same year following Kim Dae Jung's death, 2 DPRK officials came to Seoul with a message to propose secret talks in Singapore with Lee Myung Bak. South Korea agreed on this but had a change of heart months later which angered the North.

In his conclusion, Carlin explains how the problem we have today is misconception and the belief that everything has failed when in reality, it has failed because we have pushed it or let it fail. He believes that if you engage the DPRK on a single issue then this can be moved to other issues and then maybe there will be a place to restart the talks.

News & Events

India: New Future in Infrastructure & Manufacturing



Jaspal Bindra, Chief Executive Officer of Asia at Standard Chartered

August 29, 2014 - The Asia Society Korea Center, in partnership with the Embassy of India in Seoul, along with Standard Chartered Bank, Indian Chambers of Commerce in Korea (ICCK) and Mahindra & Mahindra organized one of the biggest ever Indian business symposia to be held in Korea. The event entitled, "India: New future in Infrastructure & Manufacturing" was held at the Millennium Hilton Hotel in Seoul with over 180 Korean executives, journalists and consultants attending. **Yvonne Kim**, Executive Director at the Korea Center, was the emcee for the event.

The background of the event was to explain the changes in the recent policies of the newly elected Indian government in which they are looking to expand India's manufacturing base and infrastructure, as well as create a more conducive business environment. Korea and India have strong business links with each other and there are currently over 600 South Korean companies present in India having invested over US\$5 billion. Korean companies have been investing \$25-30 billion abroad annually and are keen on scaling up their presence in India, given the huge market & business opportunities on offer.

Welcome remarks were made by **Ambassador Vishnu Prakash** before **Secretary Anil Wadhwa**, Vice Minister of External Affairs, delivered the keynote address. The Asia CEO of Standard Chartered Bank, **Mr. Jaspal Bindra**, gave a talk on "India economy, today and tomorrow" before the chairman of the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor **Mr. Talleen Kumar**, delivered his presentation. This was followed up by the president & CEO of Korea Delphi Auto Components, **Mr. Y.J. Kim**, who talked about "My India Experience". Excellent presentations were made by representatives of the Government of Gujarat, KPMG India and by the economist, **Mr. Samiran Chakraborty**. The presentations were followed by an enthusiastic Q&A session and lunch, which gave the participants ample opportunity to network.

Monthly Luncheon Series

Poverty Reduction in Vietnam: Success, Lessons and Role of World Community



H.E. Pham Huu Chi, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam In the Republic of Korea

September 16, 2014 - **H.E. Pham Huu Chi**, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam In the Republic of Korea, who talked about "Poverty Reduction in Viet Nam: Success, Lessons and Role of World Community". Poverty reduction is now at the forefront of strategy in Vietnam and the lecture highlighted the successes and achievements of more than two decades of policy implementation while also looking at the remaining challenges and solutions that Vietnam must realize. Local dignitaries, professionals, members of the press and students were all in attendance to hear the Ambassador deliver a fascinating insight into Vietnam's successful fight against poverty.

Ambassador Pham Huu Chi started his talk by explaining how poverty reduction is now a comprehensive strategy in Vietnam and this is in response to the high poverty levels Vietnam faced in the 1980's and early 1990's when the GDP of the country was around \$100 per year. In 1986 the Vietnamese government mandated the DoiMoi (open door) policy, shifting from a centrally planned economy to a market oriented one, achieving great economic and social success. This was followed up in 2002 with the launch of the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) as it was recognized that poverty was the root cause of social and political unrest. The Ambassador talked about how this poverty also affected education and health-care, led to gender inequality, the devastation of the environment and was the number one obstacle to development.

The next part of the lecture focused on the achievements and lessons learned after the implementation of these policies. The household poverty rates in Vietnam reduced dramatically from 58% in 1992 to 15.5% in 2008 and 7.6% in 2013 as more than 30 million people were lifted out of poverty. The motto of this strategy was to use the strength and resources of all of the country, central to the grass root level. Rather than giving money or food, it was explained how the Vietnamese government would teach people how to farm or fish and by giving poor people fishing nets or farm buffalos, they could find a way to support themselves. Ambassador Pham Huu Chi also talked about the crucial role that the international community plays with their assistance and cooperation and highlighted how Korea itself donates three hundred million dollars per year to assist in such projects.

In the concluding part of the lecture the remaining challenges and solutions to the issue of poverty were highlighted. First of all, the poverty rates in the upland regions and among the ethnic minorities are five times higher than 90% of the population. In addition, many poor people still live in isolated areas with no assets, poor education and poor healthcare. Finally, although the poverty rates in the urban areas are low, residents still have financial burdens because of the rising cost of food and basic services. Therefore, Vietnam must start infrastructure development in the uplands and remote areas in the forms of roads, bridges, hospitals and schools. There must also be a higher priority on education for ethnic minorities as well as enhanced community health care. The country must continue to build on the hard work and progress that has been made so far and the media must also play a greater role in highlighting the shortcomings of the government. Ambassador Pham Huu Chi ended by saying how Vietnam is not embarrassed to say that poverty in the country is high but it does not want to hide and instead wants to address the issues and in his role as a diplomatic he hoped for less spending on defense and more on reducing poverty levels for the poor.

Special Lecture

1000 days of a child in DPRK - Nutrition Challenges



Dierk Stegen, Representative of the World Food Programme In Pyongyang

September 22, 2014 - "The Asia Society Korea Center hosted a special event in Seoul this week as **Dierk Stegen**, a representative of the World Food Programme in Pyongyang was in town to talk about "1000 days of a child in DPRK – Nutrition Challenges". Dr. Stegen talked about malnutrition, an overview of the DPRK food and nutrition security, the critical stages of the first 1000 days, maternal health, nutrition challenges and finally windows of opportunity. The event carried extra significance due to the connection between the Asia Society and the World Food Programme through current President and CEO Josette Sheeran who has worked at the head of both organizations. Former Prime Minister of Korea and Honorary Chairman of the Asia Society Korea Center, **H.E. Hong-Koo Lee** was one of many distinguished guests in attendance and Dr. Lee gave the welcoming remarks at the event in which he praised the growth of the Korea Center and also talked of his hope for the future cooperation between all people on the Korean Peninsula."

Monthly Luncheon Series

Thailand, the Land of the Free, and its International Peacekeeping Efforts



H.E. Kulkumut Singhara Na Ayudhaya, Ambassador of the Royal Thai Embassy

October 29, 2014 - **H.E. Kulkumut Singhara Na Ayudhaya**, Ambassador of the Royal Thai Embassy talking about “Thailand, the Land of the Free, and its International Peacekeeping Efforts.” The talk focused on Thailand and its continuing efforts and contributions to international peace and security while also talking about Thailand’s politics, economy, society and culture. The event also gave the Ambassador the opportunity to share more about the peacekeeping roles that Thailand engages in at the international level. In attendance to the event were members from the diplomatic and business community, Asia Society members, students and press.

The first part of the lecture explained about politics, economics and society, the three attributes of Thailand that are the driving forces for the country to continue going forward and enhancing its role at the international level, especially with the contributions to international peace and security. The Ambassador highlighted how politically, despite intermittent challenges, Thai society has remained stable thanks to the enduring presence and pacifying role of the Monarchy and the country’s firm commitment to democratization. The Ambassador then went on to explain how from an economic aspect, Thailand has a dynamic free market economy – one that is open, market-based, private-sector led and integrated into the global economy. Finally, in social and cultural aspects, Thailand is a society living in harmony amidst diversity.

These three aspects allow Thailand to become a highly active country in preserving international peace and security. It was explained how Thailand fully supports the UN’s core responsibility in maintaining international peace and security around the world through the UN peace operations. Since 1950, Thailand has sent over 20,000 Thai military and police personnel to serve in over 20 UN peacekeeping and related missions worldwide, including in Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Haiti, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Lebanon and Sudan. Thailand is also a founding member and the birthplace of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) in 1967. Through the ASEAN Community to be established in 2015, Thailand aims to promote enhanced regional cooperation for peace and stability and for preventive diplomacy. The Ambassador summarized his presentation by saying how Thailand has always been ready to play an active role and to make great contributions to international peace and security regardless of what is happening at home since Thailand is well-rooted with the universal values needed for enhancing peace and security.

News & Events

My Korean Women - From Traditional to Self - reinvention



Dana Ramon Kapelian, Visual artist, Photographer, Artistic Director

The Asia Society Korea Center this week met up with renowned visual artist, photographer and artistic director **Dana Ramon Kapelian** in Seoul to discuss her new book project, “My Korean Women - From Tradition to Self-reinvention” A collection of 60 portraits of Korean women with photographs and texts issued from these exchanges.

Born in 1963 in Israel, Dana Ramon Kapelian left the country for Europe and the USA in 1983, where she studied from 1986 to 1988 at the San Francisco Art Institute, winning a Merit Scholarship and the Sobel Scholarship. She uses various techniques such as painting, engraving, installations, photography and writing to explore human socio-political conditions. Moving to South Korea in 2010, she showed her new photographic work in solo exhibitions, and in 2011, she started interviewing and taking portraits for this new book project. Dana Ramon Kapelian met with the Asia Society at a coffee shop in the French Quarter of the city to discuss the both the book and also to discuss some issues relating to the Asia Society Korea Center’s upcoming documentary on “Korean Beauty”.

Find more about the Interviews at

<http://asiasociety.org/korea/my-korean-women-tradition-self-reinvention>

Visit us at our website at www.asiasociety.org/korea

Monthly Luncheon Series

Education System in Nepal



H.E. Kaman Singh Lama, Ambassador of the Embassy of Nepal, with the Korea Center's Executive Director Yvonne Kim

November 20, 2014 – **H.E. Kaman Singh Lama**, Ambassador of the Embassy of Nepal was the guest speaker giving an insight into the “Education System in Nepal” and how lessons can be learned from South Korea.

H.E. Kaman Singh Lama began his lecture by explaining how the education system in Nepal is currently in its development stage. He said more improvement in all aspects of education, as well as the encouragement of a knowledgeable and well performing nation is what people are hoping and looking forward to. Current issues in the education sector include access, equity, quality and financing. Access to education is limited with a gross enrollment ratio of about 6%, while higher education is expanding only in the private sector. Barring a few private and public institutions, the quality of education is poor and many public institutions are not sustainable financially. To meet these challenges, Nepal has been preparing a strategic plan for the education sector, including higher education through national planning commissions. Ambassador He talked about how the Nepalese government is

learning from South Korea’s technologically advanced education system and how Nepal will formulate its education policy not by looking at yesterday or tomorrow but looking the future.

In summarizing his presentation, He explained how practical knowledge is always a better option than a theoretical approach. This change in thinking is vital for Nepal to adjust herself in the competitive world of the 21st century. The modern education system of Korea is an excellent example for Nepal to follow while developing its own education system. The Q&A session that followed provided another perspective into education in Nepal, especially to the many students in Korea who were in attendance at the luncheon.

Special Lecture

Political Unrest and Investment Opportunities in the Middle East



Mr. Saad Al-Ali, the Editor in Chief of KUNA (Kuwait News Agency)

(continued from page 1) November 7, 2014 – **Mr. Saad Al-Ali**, the Editor in Chief of KUNA (Kuwait News Agency) who gave a lecture on issues pertaining to the Middle East. As an accomplished journalist and lecturer on Middle East policies, Mr. Saad Al-Ali provided insights into “Business and Investment Opportunities in Light of the Changes and its Political Stability in the Eyes of Foreign Investors.” With his extensive experience in the Middle East and beyond, He was able to focus on both the socio- and geo-political issues in the region in order to advise Korean companies who are considering investing in the Middle East.

He began his lecture by talking about the vast political changes that have taken place in the Middle East since the 2010 incident when a Tunisian fruit vendor set fire to himself in protest against the government. Mr. Al-Ali claimed the “Arab Spring” has passed its peak and many areas of the Middle East are slowly turning towards more democratized governments. In light of this, he also noted that ISIS, which began as “no bigger than a football team”, has developed into an organization that is unlikely to be eradicated by US airstrikes alone. Mr. Al-Ali gave his sober judgment that countries moving from dictatorship to democracy can undergo a painful and a slow transformation, as seen in Iraq over the last ten years.

He stated that while Korean companies’ fears and worries were not irrational, it would be beneficial to educate Korean companies on areas in the Middle East that are safe and fertile for foreign investments. The Q&A session that followed Mr. Al- Ali’s lecture provided another unique perspective on investment opportunities given the current political unrest in the Middle East.

Global Asia Society News & Events

Nam Jun Paik: Becoming Robot



Nam June Paik (1932–2006) was a visionary artist, thinker, and innovator. Considered the “father of video art,” his groundbreaking use of video technology blurred past distinctions between science, fine art, and popular culture to create a new visual language. Paik’s interest in exploring the human condition through the lens of technology and science has created a far-reaching legacy that may be seen in broad recognition of new media art and the growing numbers of subsequent generations of artists who now use various forms of technology in their work.

The artist was born in 1932, in Seoul, Korea. He moved to Germany in 1956 to pursue his study of music, and then to New York City in 1964. Upon his arrival Paik quickly developed collaborative relationships with a circle of now iconic American artists—John Cage, Merce Cunningham, Yoko Ono, and Bill Viola, among others—and spent the duration of his career, which spanned four decades, in the United States. Through his progressive ideas and artworks, the artist dared to imagine a future where today’s technological innovations might exist, and it is this pioneering vision that has continued to shape contemporary visual culture in the United States and internationally.

Nam June Paik: Becoming Robot is the first exhibition dedicated exclusively to the artist to open in New York City in more than a decade, and focuses on Paik’s process and his philosophy toward technology, especially the relationship between technology

and the body, and the intersection of technology and culture. The exhibition presents key works from public and private collections in the United States, Europe, and Asia to show one artist’s perspective on modern society’s dependence on technology. Paik’s wildly creative artistic practice and his innovative working methods provide a backdrop for visitors to contemplate the central role technology will continue to play in art and culture for future generations.

2014 Asia Game Changer of the Year



Jack Ma, Executive Chairman, Alibaba Group

October 10 - 2014, **Jack Ma** would ride his bike for 40 minutes every morning to a local hotel in his hometown of Hangzhou, in eastern China, just to practice English with foreign tourists. That was the first sign of the global vision that would lead Jack Ma, as he later became known, to become China’s foremost internet entrepreneur, the founder and executive chairman of its largest e-commerce business, the Alibaba Group. It is this vision we now honor by naming Jack Ma our Asia Game Changer of the Year.

Ma launched Alibaba out of his Hangzhou apartment in 1999 with just a handful of colleagues. By 2012, its online transactions exceeded 1 trillion yuan (more than 162 billion U.S. dollars), and its September 2014 IPO is expected to be one of the biggest in U.S. history. But there’s much more to Ma than big paydays: Also a philanthropist, earlier this year he and Alibaba vice chairman

Joe Tsai announced the establishment of personal charitable trusts funded by share options granted by Alibaba, roughly valued at US\$3 billion. This is in addition to the Alibaba corporate charitable foundation that has been funded with 0.3% of Alibaba Group’s annual revenue since 2010. In case there was any doubt, 15 years ago Jack Ma picked his company’s name because, he later explained, “everyone knows the story of Alibaba. He’s a young man who’s willing to help others.”

"The most fun part of business, at least to me, is to contribute to the future," Ma has said. "It's not just about making money - it's about making healthy money, enabling people to enjoy their lives. I think the important thing is to wake people up and let them know that our environmental issues need to be addressed."

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On December 27, 2007, Asia Society Korea Center was designated as a public donation body by the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Finance and Economy. This means that donations to Asia Society Korea Center are subject to tax exemptions. The donor will therefore be able to receive full tax benefits, which gives prospective donors one more good reason to donate! The contributions will be used to develop innovative programs and world class events for Asia Society Korea Center's members. Help make a difference!

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Tuesday, February 10th

Tuesday, March 17th

Tuesday, April 14th

Tuesday, May 19th

Tuesday, June 16th

Tuesday, July 14th

Tuesday, September 22th

Tuesday, October 13th

Tuesday, November 17th

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Thursday, December 3

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