

**“Towards Peace on the Korean Peninsula and the EU-ROK Partnership”**  
**Monday 28 May (16:00 – 17:30) Seoul Square Building, 3Fl. Seoul Room**

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On Monday 28 May 2018, the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Korea, on behalf of Michael Reiterer (EU Ambassador to the ROK), hosted a panel discussion entitled “Towards Peace on the Korean Peninsula and the EU-ROK Partnership”. As developments on the Korean Peninsula are taking place at an increasingly fast pace, European and Korean panelists including Director General Jung Ki-hong (European Affairs Bureau of the ROK Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Professor Yoon Young-Kwan (Professor Emeritus, Seoul National University and former ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs), Professor Kim Sung-han (Professor, Korea University and former ROK Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs) and Dr. Ramon Pacheco Pardo (KF-VUB Korea Chair, Institute for European Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel) exchanged views on achieving peace and stability. The panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Joëlle Hivonnet (Minister Counsellor, EU Delegation to the ROK). The event moreover marked the launch of the KF-VUB Korea Chair in Korea.

After welcoming remarks by Michael Reiterer (EU Ambassador to the ROK), Director General Jung Ki-hong presented an opening address in which he expressed his great pleasure with the establishment of the KF-VUB Korea Chair in Brussels, the first of its kind outside of Washington DC (US). Subsequently, a panel discussion ensued and centered on three themes: Recent developments in inter-Korean relations, prospects for the expected upcoming US-North Korean summit and the role of the EU in the Korean peace process.

The first panelist, Professor Yoon Young-Kwan, admitted that although he was surprised to hear about the second inter-Korean summit that took place on 26 May, he believes that a positive message was conveyed to both the domestic Korean and international audience regarding inter-Korean rapprochement. Nonetheless, it remains very difficult to predict what will happen at the potential upcoming US-North Korea summit, scheduled for 12 June. According to Professor Yoon, three important issues remain unresolved: the precise sequencing of a potential denuclearization process, the verification of faithful implementation of any agreement reached and the definition of security guarantees to the North Korean regime. He concluded his talk by pointing out that the EU can provide technical expertise in developing the North Korean economy and can act as a guarantor for any agreement reached on denuclearization and peace.

In his presentation, Professor Kim Sung-han explained that there are three reasons that brought North Korea to the negotiation table: Chinese implementation of sanctions, the US policy of maximum pressure, and South Korea’s proactive diplomacy to build bridges between North Korea and the international community. Despite the two inter-Korean summits, Professor Kim is convinced that the North Korean position on denuclearization has not changed. The key challenge remains to find a way to ensure regime survival in order to pave the way to a denuclearization process. Consequently, Professor Kim does not expect the US-North Korean summit to produce highly significant and positive results. As for the role of EU, Professor Kim discussed the EU’s unique ability to address human rights issues as well as to contribute to North Korean economic development.

The third panelist, Dr. Ramon Pacheco Pardo, laid out several important ways in which the EU can contribute to achieving peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. First, when and if an agreement is reached, the EU can help implementing the agreement and facilitate dialogue between all parties involved to work out any unresolved and ambiguous issues. Second, as the EU has the necessary technical expertise, Europeans can contribute to the dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear capabilities. Moreover, as the EU is generally seen as a neutral party, it has a unique role to play with regard to the verification of dismantlement and any agreement more broadly. Finally, the European business community has expressed a clear interest in contributing to the economic development of North Korea. That being said, Dr. Pacheco also emphasized the willingness of Europeans to have their voice heard throughout the process, and to be an actual player as opposed to merely a payer. Dr. Pacheco ended his talk by pointing out that the EU is supportive of the Moon government's North Korea policy.

After a short Q&A session with the audience, Ambassador Reiterer concluded the discussion by emphasizing the EU's belief in multilateralism as contribution to resilience. When one is dealing with a highly complex issue, such as the North Korean nuclear question, it is helpful to have more partners to an agreement to protect it from the effects of unilateral defection.