

The Future of North Korea: Democracy and Respect for Human Rights in sight?

on the Occasion of the 20th Forum 2000 Conference

18 October 2016 (10:00-11:30) Goethe Institut, Prague

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the DPRK concluded in its report published in February 2014 (A/HRC/25/63) that “systemic, widespread and gross human rights violations have been and are being committed by the DPRK. The gravity, scale and nature of these violations reveal a State that does not have any parallel in the contemporary world.” The UN report also recommended that “the international community must accept its responsibility to protect the people of the DPRK from crimes against humanity, because the Government of the DPRK has manifestly failed to do so.” There have been international efforts to address the human rights situation in the DPRK, yet to no avail thus far. As of today, North Korea still remains one of the most repressive countries in the world. Hence we are taking this opportunity to i) increase the public awareness of the dire human rights and democracy situation in the DPRK; ii) call on the international community to pay attention and exert concerted efforts in addressing the human rights situation in the DPRK; and iii) better prepare the international community in responding to a scenario of the worsening situation in North Korea.

FORMAT

The seminar will consist of presentations by two North Korean defectors, followed by comments from invited experts. Following the presentations and comments, the floor will be opened for questions and answers.

DATE AND VENUE

Tuesday, 18 October 2016 (10:00-11:30) at Goethe Institut, Prague

PARTICIPANTS

Jin-sung Jang

Author of ‘Dear Leader: Poet, Spy, Escapee - A Look Inside North Korea’

A North Korean defector known to have been one of the late Kim Jong-il’s favorite state-appointed propaganda poets. Before defecting to South Korea in 2004, Mr. Jang had worked as a psychological warfare officer within the North Korean government, crafting pro-regime

propaganda campaigns and writing epic poems praising the dictatorship. Today, as a founder and publisher of New Focus, a North Korean news outlet run by North Korean defectors, he is one of the most vocal critics of the North Korean regime.

So-yeon Lee

President of the New Korea Women's Union

A former signal corpswoman with the North Korean army, Ms. Lee defected to South Korea in 2008 on her second attempt. When her first attempt failed in 2006, she was forcibly returned to North Korea and imprisoned for one year. Today, as head of the New Korea Women's Union, an association of North Korean defectors, Ms. Lee works as a North Korean refugee advocate and hosts talks to speak about human rights violations against women in the North.

Scott A. Snyder

Senior Fellow for Korean Studies/Director of the Program on U.S.-Korea Policy, Council on Foreign Relations, U.S.A.

A specialist in the research and studies on U.S.-Korea policy, Korea studies and international relations, Mr. Snyder has authored numerous books on Korean politics and foreign policy, the Japan-South Korea relationship on East Asian security, South Korea's contribution to international security, and politics, economy and society of North Korea.

Geunwook Lee

Professor, Department of Political Science, Sogang University, Republic of Korea

Professor Lee has been teaching at Sogang University since 2004. A member of the Korean Political Science Association and the Korean Association of International Studies, Professor Lee has written extensively on North Korea, international relations in Northeast Asia, U.S. strategies and policies in East Asia, and various issues on military security.

Michael Staack

Professor of Political Science and International Relations, Helmut-Schmidt University, Germany

A Co-Director of the Institute of International Politics at Helmut-Schmidt University in Hamburg, Professor Staack is also a member of the High-Level Advisory Group on Foreign Policy Implications of Korean Reunification under the Foreign Ministries of Germany and Republic of Korea since 2014. He has produced various publications on transatlantic relations and East Asia, European security, world order policy and German foreign policy.

PROGRAM

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| 10:00-10:05 | Opening Remarks by the H.E. Mr. Jung-Hoon Lee, Ambassador for North Korean Human Rights of the Republic of Korea |
| 10:05-10:25 | Presentation by Mr. Jin-sung Jang |
| 10:25-10:45 | Presentation by Ms. So-yeon Lee |

10:45-10:55	Expert's comment by Mr. Scott A. Snyder
10:55-11:05	Expert's comment by Professor Geunwook Lee
11:05-11:15	Expert's comment by Professor Michael Staack
11:15-11:30	Q&A

WORKING LANGUAGE

English