

1. Activities

- 1.10. The Institute for Far Eastern Studies, Kyungnam University (Director Lee Kwan-Sei) holds the 73rd Unification Strategy Forum on 'North Korea: Assessment of 2023 and Outlook for 2024'.
 - In his remarks, Director Lee Kwan-Sei said, "This Unification Strategy Forum was an opportunity to evaluate the projects North Korea has promoted so far based on the results of the 9th plenary of the 8th Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, and to comprehensively analyze and discuss future directions of the state administration and prospects. . . . The year 2024 will be a more uncertain and turbulent year than any other year."
 - He further emphasize that, "The situation on the Korean Peninsula is very fluid due to political changes such as the upcoming U.S. presidential election, the South Korean general election, and Taiwan's presidential election, as well as the strengthening of solidarity between North Korea, China, and Russia, so thorough preparation and strategic response to overcome complex factors are essential."
- 1.23. The Institute for Far Eastern Studies, Kyungnam University (Director Lee Kwan-Sei) holds a closed-door 'North Korea In-Depth Research Roundtable'
 - Opinions were expressed on the expected political effects that the North Korean regime hopes to gain by introducing Kim Jong Un's daughter Kim Joo-ae, and comparative analysis of the previous two successions were discussed.
 - In addition, rather than consuming the currently fragmented possibility of North Korea's fourth generation hereditary succession as a matter of gossip-like controversy, participants agreed that it should be analyzed deeply in terms of changes in North Korea's Kim Jong Un regime after the WPK 8th Party Congress, which took place in January 2021.
- 1.25. 'North Korea Issue Expert Roundtable' held together with the

Institute for Far Eastern Studies, Kyungnam University' (Director Lee Kwan-Sei) and the University of North Korean Studies (President Yang Moo-Jin)

- This expert roundtable discussed the following presentation topics: The relationship between the North Korean Workers' Party rules and the Constitution; Changes in North Korea's foreign trade policy and system; Comparative study of the Kim Jong-Il regime and the Kim Jong-Un regime; Implementation of carbon neutrality on the Korean Peninsula through implementation of Korea's National Greenhouse Gas Reduction Target (NDC) Plan; Exploring the possibility of inter-Korean cooperation based on Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement and studying the implementation system.

- 1.26. The Institute for Far Eastern Studies, Kyungnam University (Director Lee Kwan-Sei) holds the 15th roundtable jointly with the Embassy of Canada in Korea

- Under the theme of 'Key Outcomes and Prospects for North Korea in 2024', officials from various embassies in Korea gathered to discuss current issues in North Korea and prospects for the coming year.

- Director Lee Kwan-Sei evaluated that the outcomes of the 9th plenary of the 8th Central Committee of the WPK present a fundamental change in North Korea's policy toward South Korea. His presentation included discussion of the rise of the two-nation theory and comparative implications from the historical German case.

- 1.26. The 5th Samcheong Forum was held under the theme "Taiwan Presidential Election Results and Cross-Strait Relations Outlook"

- Professor Emeritus Moon Heungho (Hanyang University Graduate School of International Studies, Department of Chinese Studies) stated that in the case of Taiwan, "whichever party is elected does not actually have a significant impact on cross-Strait relations, . . . Cross-Strait relations depend on the United States and China."

- In addition, he emphasized that the connection between the Taiwan Strait and the Korean Peninsula is close, and that although the possibility of war is low, the possibility of conflict of various scope exists, and because of this Korea needs to consider crisis management and preparedness measures.

2. IFES in the Media

- 1.22. Jae Kyu Park, President of Kyungnam University, Interview with the Korea Times
 - President Jae Kyu Park said, "The scope of President Yoon's policy toward North Korea has been greatly limited by North Korea's reckless pursuit of nuclear and missile advancement and refusal to engage in dialogue, but unilateral sanctions and pressure policies against North Korea may provide a justification for North Korea to advance its nuclear weapons."
 - He also said, "Considering that North Korea blew up the inter-Korean joint liaison office in 2020 under the pretext of our side distributing anti-North Korea leaflets, there is a possibility of a military conflict if leaflet distribution and loudspeaker broadcasting resume in frontline areas."
 - He predicted that "North Korea will maintain a hard-line policy while waiting for the [U.S.] election results with the intention of negotiating with the next U.S. government rather than negotiating with the Biden administration."