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THE SIXTH SEOUL-WASHINGTON FORUM:
MOVING THE UNITED STATES-KOREA RELATIONSHIP
FORWARD IN CHANGING ENVIRONMENTS

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Keynote Address:

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Panelists:

Evolving Domestic Politics in Korea and the United States:

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North Korea Under New Leadership:

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The Changing East Asian Power Structure:

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Discussants:

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PROCEEDINGS

RICHARD BUSH: Good morning. My name is Richard Bush. I'm the Director of the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies here at Brookings. And it's my great honor to welcome all of you to this meeting of the Sixth Seoul-Washington Forum. The Forum is a joint venture of the Brookings Institution and the Korea Foundation. Our two institutions have had a long and mutually beneficial relationship, particularly concerning the work of my center, the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies.

On this occasion I'm pleased to welcome to Brookings the Korea Foundation's new president, Dr. Kim Woosang, who has had a distinguished career at two prominent Korean universities and more recently was the Republic of Korea's Ambassador to Australia. Welcome President Kim.

The Seoul-Washington Forum began in 2006 and has since become a venue for a serious exchange among scholars, former officials of our two countries, on evolving opportunities and challenges in the U.S.-ROK alliance. We're privileged to be the American partner for the Korea Foundation in this important endeavor.

The discussion this year is important because of multiple political transitions -- the surprise death of Kim Jong-il late last year and the quick emergence of his son; the leadership transition in China, which will begin this fall; the U.S. presidential election in November; and the presidential election in the Republic of Korea in December. So 2012 is a great year for political pundits, but there are other issues at play. The North Korean transition does raise the question of what exactly is going on in this not-so-transparent place, and what are the implications of those developments for regional security?

Now in the past day or so we've had a closed meeting on these issues, and we benefited during those discussions by having with us our old friend, General Lee Sanghee, National Assemblyman Jin Ha Hwang; and National Assemblywoman Park Sun Young.

Today to help us answer these questions for you, our public audience, we have some of South Korea's leading scholars. But to start off and to frame these issues for us, we are really privileged to have our good friend, Dr. Sung Joo HAN, offer a keynote address. Dr. Han is currently Professor Emeritus at Korea University, but he's far from a humble scholar. He served as the ROK's Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1993 to '94. He was Ambassador to the United States from 2003 to 2005. He's had special assignments for the United Nations, and was Chairman of the East Asia Vision Group in 2000 and 2001. And most recently he was President of Korea University.

He will speak on the subject of North Korea, China, and the ROK-U.S. alliance. After his talk he will take some questions, and then we will move to our panel. Dr. Han.

HAN SUNG-JOO: Thank you very much. I'm very happy to be back in Washington, D.C., and at Brookings.

The South Korea-U.S. alliance, as many of you know, was forged in 1953 after the end of the Korean War. At the time, South Korea signed the pact to deter another invasion by the North, while the U.S. saw the alliance as a means to implement its containment strategy and stem the spread of Communism in East Asia. In the ashes of the war and given the geopolitical situation of the time, few could have imagined that nearly 60 years later today the ROK-U.S. alliance would become one of the key lynchpins for U.S. economic and security policy in the region, yet here we are today.

This global strategic alliance has become a model for others around the world and is being strengthened now by President Lee Myung-bak and President Barack Obama, the latter being a leader who was born in 1961, long after the alliance pact was forged. As President Obama remarked a few weeks ago, the closeness and strength of the ROK-U.S. relationship is marked by the fact that he has visited Seoul more times than any other capital in the world during his presidential term.

I would like to speak today about three areas where we should maintain efforts to closely coordinate on policy to foster the conditions for regional peace and to decrease the possibility of misunderstandings and miscalculations arising.

First, I would like to talk about North Korean policy. Second, I will speak about the China factor and its impact on the alliance. And lastly, I will briefly address the effect of domestic politics on bilateral relations.

First on North Korea: For once, at present, the United States and the Republic of Korea seem to be in locked steps together in their attitude and dealings with North Korea. There appears to be an alignment of domestic and international factors that have favored the U.S. and South Korea, taking the same approach towards North Korea. Both countries are highly disappointed with North Korea's policies and behavior related to their nuclear weapon development, launching of missiles, participation in the Six-Party Talks, compliance or noncompliance with agreements, and conventional provocations. We have reached a point where both governments, the U.S. and the South Korean, seem to have pretty much given up on negotiating with North Korea, where no one is strong and confident enough to make big decisions or agreements that will bind North Korea to any meaningful compromise or commitment.

While presently we appear to be on the same page with regard to policy towards North Korea, as many of you know we have not always shared the

same perspective on how to deal with Pyongyang. Over time in dealing with North Korea, sometimes South Korea took a harder line than the United States. At other times it was the other way around. I served as Foreign Minister when the South Korean president took a harder line, vis-à-vis North Korea, than the U.S. administration of President Clinton. I had the difficult task of bridging that gap. Eight years later, between 2003 and 2005, I served as the Korean Ambassador to the United States when the table was turned around as the Bush Administration, at least during the first term, took a much harder line toward North Korea than the South Korean government of President Roh Moo-hyun. At the time, I had the challenging task of trying to make one government understand the other government's position and vice versa.

Based on this experience, I would say that because of South Korea being one-half of a country divided into two parts, it is easier for the South Korean public to accept a situation in which the South Korean government takes a harder line than when it is the other way around -- that is, the U.S. government taking the hard line. The reason is that if the U.S. takes a harder line, it is perceived and criticized as getting in the way of North and South Korea trying to mend their differences and reconcile with each other. The progressives and those who already hold a negative attitude toward the United States, especially with the U.S.-Korea alliance and the presence of U.S. troops in Korea, often try to take advantage of the situation by criticizing the United States for being tough on their brethren in the North no matter what the reason is, as they did during the Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun Administrations. However, with the recent alignment of goals and the Obama Administration's policy of rebalancing toward Asia, there appears to be increased chances for the U.S. and South Korea to continue close policy coordination in the region and avoid drastic differences on attitudes and approaches towards North Korea. With a pivot to Asia, it seems that the United States will continue to value its alliance with South Korea.

In particular two factors have contributed to strengthening the U.S.-Korea alliance: The aggressiveness of North Korea and the rise of China. Because North Korea emerged as an even larger threat since 2009 due to its nuclear and missile tests, military provocations, and uranium enrichment program, the South Korea-U.S. alliance has been strengthened with the two sides stepping up joint military drills and boosting the deterrent power Washington extends to its allies. In the midst of increasing provocations by North Korea, cooperation and clear communication between the United States and South Korea has become even more vital.

Since the death of Kim Jong-il, the North Korean leadership has been even more defiant than before of the outside world, as shown in the launching -- albeit failed -- of the long-range rocket in April. North Korea has also been confrontational and combative to South Korea, as shown in the open threats of inflicting harm to, according to them, "Lay in ashes" two of the South Korean leadership and some media for their supposed failure to show proper respect to its revered new leader. In fact, the North Korean behavior has been

extreme and untoward by even North Korea's own standards. Now North Korea has made it clear that it has no intention of giving up its nuclear weapons by inscribing its status as a nuclear weapon state in the forward of its revised Constitution. It is a measure that, in effect, nullifies the February 1992 joint declaration of South and North Korea on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the September 2005 six-party agreement on Denuclearization.

What is the purpose of these extremely aggressive actions? There are several possibilities. One is to create a conflict situation in South Korea with a view to fostering insecurity in the South and solidarity in the North. Another is to show defiance to the rest of the world, particularly to China and the United States. Another could be to counter and divert internal dissatisfaction caused by economic difficulties and political oppression. There is the possibility that it is the result of competition within the leadership for loyalty and toughness.

Whatever the purpose of this intransigence and combativeness, how do we explain the manifestation of the North Korean leadership's seemingly inconsistent behavior after Kim Jong-il's death? One explanation is that it is the Kim Jong-un factor that is responsible for the confrontational stands that the new leadership is taking. According to this explanation, his young age, inexperience, pampered life from his childhood, compulsion he feels to demonstrate that he is tough enough a leader, the desire to curry favor with the hardliners -- presumably the military -- all these factors may have contributed to his decisions to defy the world and challenge South Korea.

Another explanation is found in the fact that there is no strong enough leader in the group who is confident enough with his or their position, internally and externally. No one feels secure with his power of position that he or they can show flexibility and moderation toward the outside world. Instead, everyone is the oligarchy. Everyone in the oligarchy feels compelled to follow the hard line of the past regarding nuclear weapons and missiles and toward South Korea, even with excess and with vengeance.

A third explanation is that there probably is a division of labor within the group in policymaking -- economic and administrative matters on the one hand, and military and foreign affairs on the other. The first domain presumably belongs to the civilian leaders, led by Jang Song-taek, uncle-in-law of Kim Jong-un, who is acting as the guardian of Kim Jong-un and, thus, second most powerful man in the group and country. The second domain, military and foreign affairs -- especially toward China, the United States, and South Korea -- presumably belongs to the few military leaders who are in the top hierarchy of the ruling group. And it has been their attitudes and policy choices that have been reflected in the behavior that North Korea has exhibited so far. They may want to throw a monkey wrench into the negotiating process, be it the six-party talks or the Leap Day Agreement.

Parenthetically, there is a third domain in which Kim Jong-un seems to be in firm control. It is the grounds-keeping in some of the playgrounds where Kim Jong-un, wearing a straw hat as his grandfather, Kim Il-sung, had, as seen on North Korean television as scolding the groundskeepers for not weeding out wild grass properly. In this kind of power configuration, if that, in fact, resembles the reality, Kim Jong-un at the moment may not amount to much more than a figurehead, although his stature and power might be rising. He has all the necessary titles in the party government and military to eventually garner and increase his power to emerge as an undisputed dictator that his father and grandfather had been. But it will take some time before this happens, and Kim Jong-un can replace the older generation leaders with individuals of the younger generation in the military party and government.

Additionally, to make matters more complicated, there are other confusing signals coming out of North Korea. In order to remain solvent, North Korea's leadership now has the difficult task of improving its faltering economy, feeding its people, and resolving energy and other resource shortages. And it is in this area where Kim Jong-un has been expressing intentions to opening North Korea to limited reforms. The Kaesong Industrial Complex, created by the investment of South Korean companies and which brings in some \$50 million per year of foreign currency for North Korea, remains untouched despite the deteriorating North-South Korean relations.

It is difficult to tell how this new leadership of North Korea will proceed and end up in terms of its power configuration, personnel, policies, and successes and failures. However, after examining the available information, two possibilities appear to be most plausible. One is the eventual soft landing for the three-generation dynastic succession. If North Korea can be restrained from provocative acts that could escalate into greater catastrophe for North Korea in the short to medium term, the chances are that Kim Jong-un will gradually consolidate his power and position, will be able to reign in the military, improve relations with the United States as his father, Kim Jong-il, had presumably instructed his successors to do, and even reach out for an accommodating hand to South Korea.

For such a soft landing scenario to materialize, it will require a very skillful response, both firm and flexible, by the outside world, including China, the United States, Russia, Japan, and South Korea. On the other hand, there is the possibility of an internal power struggle between and among cliques and individuals, including Kim Jong-un himself. Another possibility is that the leadership, if not divided, cannot provide the people with the daily necessities of food and other essentials, such as energy, with the result of internal explosion or implosion. North Korea's neighbors should cooperate and coordinate in case of such a contingency situation. And at times such as these, the state of the U.S. and South Korea alliance will be very important for ensuring stability and security in the region. Thus, considering both past experience and future possibilities, the

United States and South Korea should remain diligent and vigilant in their efforts to maintain a strong alliance.

Now I would like to move on to discuss the topic of China. It appears that whether Kim Jong-un emerges as the real leader eventually will depend on China's recognition of his power and, of course, the ability and determination of Kim Jong-un himself. While Kim Jong-il was more independent minded and had anti-China sentiments in many respects, while the current North Korean leadership needs China's support more and is likely to be more malleable to Chinese influence, pressure and persuasion, the latest indication is that China might be increasing its influence over North Korea. In the aftermath of the Chinese fishermen fiasco, it seems that the North Korean leadership is being forced to comply with the Chinese wishes that North Korea behave a bit better in all fronts.

What is the Chinese game plan regarding North Korea? We, meaning the United States, South Korea, and Japan, all complain that China is not doing enough, putting enough pressure on North Korea to denuclearize itself, and make it to behave vis-à-vis the rest of the world, particularly to South Korea. Isn't China worried about North Korea becoming a bona fide nuclear weapon state with potent missiles posing a threat to China itself as well as South Korea, Japan, and the United States? Does China actually lack, as China feigns, the kind of influence that will make North Korea less aggressive and dangerous? China must recognize the threat and danger of North Korea becoming a nuclear weapon state. Nevertheless, China also wants to keep the North Korean regime afloat and use its influence in a parsimonious way in order to keep its status as a guardian power of North Korea. It also wants to prevent a serious military conflict taking place in the Korean Peninsula. China probably saw the death of Kim Jong-il both as a crisis and as an opportunity. It was a crisis in that North Korea may lack a strong enough leader who is capable of tightly controlling the nuclear weapons and missiles, but it was also an opportunity for China to increase its influence and persuasive power over North Korea. In any event, North Korea, in the aftermath of Kim Jong-il's death, seems to have tried to resist and reject Chinese influence. Ultimately, however, in the absence of a strong leader such as Kim il-sung and Kim Jong-il, North Korea was not in a position to defy China and play its own version of brinkmanship, vis-à-vis China.

Why does China appear to shield and support North Korea? The problem lies with the fact that often a country's goals and interests tend to contradict one another. China wants to achieve a denuclearized North Korea, but it also wants to maintain the North Korean regime and to manage the situation on the Korean Peninsula so that there will be no military clashes. China seems to feel that a strong pressure on North Korea could, in turn, lead to the collapse of the North Korean regime. Thus, if China wants to sustain the North Korean regime, it has no choice but to tread lightly on the nuclear problem and react gently to North Korea's other transgressions.

The expressive decision of North Korea to become a nuclear weapon state by inscribing the intention in its Constitution presents China with a major dilemma in dealing with North Korea. As China is undergoing its own power transition, it will have to wait until after the new leadership settles in before any major policy shift or initiative, vis-à-vis North Korea, can take place. It is clear that China dreads a North Korean regime collapse. It also wants to increase its influence over North Korea at a time when North Korea badly needs the support and embrace of China. By endorsing the third-generation dynastic succession of Kim Jong-un, China can easily produce an IOU that it can use over North Korea. China has taken up the dual role of shielding North Korea from international condemnation and restraining North Korea from further provocations.

But on its part, China has to make a choice either to continue to play its role of a guardian, if reluctantly, for North Korea, or to deal with North Korea in a more firm way. China could ultimately see North Korea more as a burden than as an asset and recognize the benefit of strengthening its relationship with South Korea. Thus, China has become an important factor in the U.S.-Korea alliance with the rise of its economic and military power, with its relations with and policy toward North Korea, and overall relations with the United States which have elements of both cooperation and competition, if not confident.

Both the United States and South Korea have an interest in including China to persuade North Korea to denuclearize, refrain from provocations, and to open up to and accommodate with the rest of the world. South Korea would like to maintain and expand close economic relations -- as China and South Korea agreed as the Strategic Cooperative Partnership -- with China, even as it maintains a close military alliance with the United States. The United States has an interest in maximizing its positive-sum game aspect and minimizing the zero-sum game aspect of its relations with China. A close and cooperative relationship with China, either by the United States or South Korea, is not necessarily at the expense of a close relationship between the two allies.

Needless to say, there are other factors besides North Korea or China that would affect the future of the U.S.-Korea alliance in addition to the North Korea and China factors. In particular, domestic politics, such as who will win in the presidential elections to be held later this year respectively in the United States and South Korea, will obviously have an impact on the alliance. However, the options that future administrations can choose from are rather limited. Thus, it is unlikely that no matter which leaders are elected, major redirection or change will take place regarding the U.S.-ROK alliance.

At the same time, there is no assurance that the Seoul-Washington alliance will remain solid indefinitely. Since 2008, the Seoul-Washington and Washington-Tokyo alliances have shifted in terms of priority and closeness, and this may change again depending on domestic political developments and external factors. With the Pentagon saving expenses due to the U.S. fiscal problems,

South Korea and other allies may be expected to shoulder greater portions of joint military expenditures. There are other serious issues, including the negotiation between the allies involving the range of missiles that South Korea can develop and the revision of the Nuclear Cooperation Agreement. There might again develop a gap in how to deal with North Korea, its nuclear and missile programs, and on the method and format of negotiating with South Korea, although for the time being I don't see too serious of problems evolving in the alliance relationship between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

In conclusion, alliances are like living organisms and must be cared for constantly. This means both sides must expand their mutual interests. The sharing of values is just as important as geopolitical interests. As South Korea progressed on its road to democratization, the United States has been a partner and is seeking to create shared values based on this accomplishment. The two countries must let shared values -- like democracy, prosperity, stability, and welfare -- serve as strong foundations for the further development of the alliance. Thank you very much.

DR. BUSH: Thank you Ambassador Han for those incisive remarks. We now have a little time for questions. We have mics, I'm sure. So once I call on you, please wait for the mic and identify yourself and pose your question. Ambassador Goodby?

QUESTION: Well, thank you very much, Dr. Han, for a typically brilliant presentation covering almost everything. A couple of issues left off, however, I'd like to raise with you. It's really two related questions that I have.

One is whether you see any prospects at all for a revival of the six-party talks? They seem to be at least moribund and probably dead, but people keep talking about them.

And second, do you see any merit in a new forum for consultation in Northeast Asia that would include the five countries apart from North Korea, if North Korea opts out of such a thing? I would imagine they would. I would think there might be merit personally in that. I've been pushing it for many years. But is there a possibility it might be a topic for conversation now in light of the circumstances that you described? Thank you. Oh by the way, I'm Jim Goodby from Brookings Institution. Sorry, Richard.

DR. HAN: If one of the important reasons or objectives of the hardliners in North Korea for doing what they do, like undoing the Leap Day Agreement or inscribing the nuclear weapon state status in their Constitution, is so they can stop any productive negotiation, multilateral or bilateral, on the nuclear question, and if we say we are not going back to the Six-Party Talks because of those reasons, we are, in fact, satisfying the wishes and plans of those hardliners in North Korea. And that is precisely the dilemma we have, as we did even when there were incidents such as the Cheonan incident and the

Yeonpyeong shelling. Not going to the six-party talks was a clear expression of our dissatisfaction and anger, but at the same time it seemed to hurt us as much as it hurt North Korea for doing what they had done.

And so I personally think we should not take the issue of what the North Koreans have done so far as a reason not to respond to six-party talks. And with the kind of memory span we have on major issues, I think even though all the countries now, including China, seem to be underemphasizing the six-party talks, the interest in six-party talks will emerge. The problem is that there is this power transition or elections in these major countries, not only in North Korea, but in South Korea, in the United States, and most importantly in China. So any major initiative or push to come along will probably have to wait at least until the end of the year.

The second question about the forum, South Korea and I personally always pushed for a five-party format in the absence of North Korea. Of course, it was usually China which did not want to come along in that scheme. And as the relationship between China and North Korea undergoes some change as a result of the North Korean provocations, North Korean defiance, I think there might be a time when China would feel that it can participate in this kind of five-party process -- which, in fact, will ultimately help to bring North Korea into the fold rather than permanently exclude North Korea. So I think that will ultimately happen.

DR. BUSH: Thank you. I see Michael Yahuda, right here.

QUESTION: Michael Yahuda from GW. Dr. Han, as you know, for the past several years, the Foreign Ministers of your country, Japan, and China, have been meeting separately on an almost institutionalized basis, focusing mainly on economic relationships. Do you see any relationship between those kinds of meetings and the development of presumably some kind of trust -- do you see any relevance or significance arising from that for the issues that you've been raising before us?

DR. HAN: Yes, it's not only the Foreign Ministers, but now the heads of government of the three countries have been meeting on the side of the larger area of the situations. And so far there have been more visible, what you would call sort of trophy-like results such as the three-country secretariat established in Seoul. Most recently the three heads of government agreed to promote a three-country FTA. And as much as a FTA has political and even security implications as economic significance in that sense, I think it is making some headway. As you know, between China and Japan, between Korea and Japan, there are elements which make their relationships prickly and, therefore, sometimes this kind of cooperation becomes rather difficult. But it is also an element that will help overcome such difficulties. And in addition to the bilateral efforts between China and South Korea, between China and Japan, between South Korea and Japan, on FTA, the three-country FTA negotiation and discussion, I

think will contribute to a greater sense of solidarity and common belonging among these three countries.

And it is something that will not only help these three countries, but also other countries, especially the ally of Japan and South Korea, which is the United States. And this is good for everybody around.

DR. BUSH: Thank you. Alan Romberg.

QUESTION: Thank you very much. Good to see you. Actually I now have a second question adding to it in light of your answer to Jim Goodby. In light of what you said about what's happening in North Korea and North Korea's policies and so on, what would you see coming out -- even though lots of people share the instinct to get back to a table, what would you think would actually come out of six-party talks in a near-term timeframe that's useful for all of us?

And my original question is your point about China and rethinking the pros and cons of its policy toward North Korea. What do you think it would take to get China to see that North Korea is more of a burden than an asset?

DR. HAN: Well, Six-Party Talks is both the function of bilateral relations and talks, and at the same time it affects bilateral negotiation. One of the, I think, very important results or the fruits of Six-Party Talks is enabling bilateral negotiations as it did in 2005 and later on until at least the end of 2008. So it was interesting when I was here in Washington in 2004 at the time of the presidential election. There was this debate between candidates George Bush and John Kerry about the wisdom of Six-Party Talks and bilateral talks because to me, they went together rather than it was one or the other kind of proposition. So in addition to the six-party talks being a multilateral mechanism which can produce agreements such as the September 2005 agreement which was mainly a function of the agreement between the United States, bilateral agreement, between the United States and North Korea, which was possible because the six-party talks were taking place. I think in the future, again, it will provide the overall framework where these very important bilateral discussions and negotiations will take place. And then the multilateral setup will endorse the bilateral agreement and also help enforce it. It has not been a complete success so far, but I think it can still serve a very useful purpose.

As for China, already the most important thing that will affect China's attitude is North Korea's own doings and attitudes. And so far my feeling is that the post-Kim Jong-il era of North Korea has been a big disappointment to China. In fact, I think the fishermen and fishing boat incident was from both countries' point of view, China and North Korea, sort of a blessing in disguise because it helped to put North Korea in proper place, vis-à-vis China, at least from the Chinese point of view. But if such incidents continue and North Korea again decides to defy China in terms of its provocative acts or its more intransigent acts related to missile tests or nuclear weapons tests, I think those are

the kinds of things that will make China rethink about its relationship with North Korea.

The only other key element is internal Chinese politics right now that is in progress and that has to be sorted out before any new initiative or change can take place.

DR. BUSH: One last question. Larry Niksch.

QUESTION: Larry Niksch from CSIS. Dr. Han, as you pointed out, President Lee has linked South Korean policy toward North Korea very closely to the U.S. denuclearization policy. Now looking ahead, the leaders of the democratic unity party have indicated that they would seek a significant delinkage of South Korea's policy from the U.S. denuclearization policy. And several South Koreans that I have heard have also said that Madame Park Geun-hye is also in favor of some degree of delinkage of South Korea's policy towards North Korea's away from the U.S. denuclearization policy.

If this is the future, do you agree that there ought to be some delinkage of South Korean policy from the U.S. denuclearization policy? Are there some independent initiatives that the new South Korean president in your view could take toward the North that would be not totally tied to the U.S. denuclearization policy, would be in South Korea's interest, but would not do significant damage to the alliance?

DR. HAN: I'm not very clear about the meaning of "delinkage." The U.S. policy related to North Korean nuclear weapons has evolved not independently by somebody's own thinking, whether it's President Obama or Secretary Clinton, but it is the result of many years of experience working together. And, therefore, for me it is almost impossible to think of delinkage even in any significant degree, if not completely. We have come to this point in the absence of any better policy.

People talk about the failure of past policies and the problems with certain measures and so on. But I haven't come up -- I haven't found any workable alternative policy that I can think of. And whether the next president in Korea comes from the government party now or from the opposition party, I can't think of any fundamentally different kind of policy regarding North Korean nuclear weapons. Not that what we have done was the best policy; we could have done better. But the basic line couldn't have been changed.

I don't think my response is very satisfactory to you, but I don't think the notion that there will be this delinkage is either exaggerated or somewhat incorrectly known, certainly not in Seoul. I don't know what you're talking about in this town about this problem.

DR. BUSH: Okay. Dr. Han, thank you very much. You've kicked us off brilliantly.

We will now shift to the panel. Please bear with us while we change the name plates. We'll get started right away. If I could ask the members of the panel to come up to the stage. For those of you who are standing in the back, there are about eight seats up here in the front if you'd like to sit down and get a better view.

Ladies and gentlemen, if I could ask you to take your seats, I think we're ready to resume. Please have a seat, and we'll get going. We have three presentations and two commentators, and then we want to benefit from the wisdom of people in the audience so we should begin.

Our first speaker is Professor Hoon Jaung, and he will speak about South Korean politics. You have the bios of each of our speakers or they were available outside. Professor Jaung is a professor at the Chung-Ang University. Professor Jaung.

HOON JAUNG: Thank you, Mr. Bush. Good morning. It's very nice to be back to Brookings, and it's nice to be part of the Seoul-Washington Forum. This morning my subject is the new Korean National Assembly and its implication for the ROK-U.S. relationship.

A few months ago when the organizers of this meeting asked me to give a talk on the new Korean National Assembly and its implication for the ROK-U.S. relationship, probably they were sharing the general expectation that there would be a dramatic power shift within the Korean National Assembly and that that would be a daunting task for the ROK and U.S. relationship, and I shared that prediction. But as we all know, dynamic Korean politics betrayed such a prediction and Saenuri, the new conservative party, secured the majority handily in the April election. If you look some interesting changes in the new National Assembly, there are still several daunting tasks and challenges not just for Korea, but also for the ROK-U.S. relationship.

So I'll talk about three things in the new Korean National Assembly. The first one is the ideological shift to the left among National Assemblymen and its implication for the ROK-U.S. relationship. And the second thing is a new procedure within the National Assembly, which emphasizes the veto power of the minority party within the National Assembly Hall. And finally I will briefly touch upon the December presidential election and its implication for the future of the two nations' relationship.

So let me begin with the ideological shift among National Assemblymen to the left. I think there are three dimensions in the ideological shift within the National Assembly. First of all the backdrop, the backdrop among the general public's shift to the left, moderately shifted to the left. Look at

this table. During the late Roh Moo-hyun era and all the Roh Moo-hyun era -- 2007, 2008 -- among the general public the liberals' share was about 25 percent or so. But it gradually picked up, and earlier this year they went up to 35 percent. Can you see the liberal numbers? No? All right. Anyhow -- better? Anyhow, let me repeat, about 2007 and 2008 the liberal share was about 24 percent or 23.9 percent. And it picked up just before the April election. They went up to 35 percent. So the general mood was a little moderate shift to the left among the general electorate.

The second dimension is ideological positions among National Assemblymen. We have a survey on more than 200 elected members of Parliament, and we asked them to have a self-placed ideological position on zero-to-ten scale, zero denotes extreme left and ten denotes extreme right. And the bottom graphic represents the new National Assemblymen's policy positions. The overall voters' position in the 18th National Assembly was 5.4 and in the 19th National Assembly, general voters' position was 5.1, a very moderate shift to the center. And the GNP sustained its conservative position from 6.0 in the 18th National Assembly to 6.2 in the 19th. The remarkable thing is DUP, the main opposition party, their position was 4.4 on this 10-point scale, and the new elected DUP members issue position was put on 2.9. It's a dramatic shift to the left. The DUP and its predecessors never have gone below 3. Used to be it was 3.9, 4.0, so they moved remarkably to the left to 2.9. And they had the electoral alliance with UPP, which has 1.6 on the 10-point scale.

This diagram represents more specific issues and Parliamentary members' positions on specific questions in the 19th National Assembly. Saenuri, the new conservative party, sustains its old conservative position on foreign policy. But the DUP's, the democratic party's, position on foreign policy issues -- such as the relationship with the U.S., how to engage with North Korea, and how about the U.S.-ROK FTA issues -- their position is 2.2. It used to be in the -- you cannot see in this diagram, but it used to be in the 18th National Assembly, their position was 3.4 on foreign policy issues. And Saenuri's predecessor, GNP's, position was 6.0. So the relative distance between Saenuri and DUP has been widened dramatically. Used to be the relative distance was 2.6 in the 18th National Assembly, and in the 17th National Assembly the relative distance was 2.0 on a 10-point scale. Now it has widened up to around 4.0 points. So that means some possibility of a clash on the issues of how to deal with North Korea, how to deal with the ROK-U.S. alliance and FTA issues, and on and on and on.

Another dimension of the ideological shift is an electoral manifesto of the major two parties. This table provides a summary of a new electoral platform of the conservative party. It used to be in 2004 the predecessor of GNP emphasized a balanced democracy, big market-small government. Number three is a fair and transparent market economy. Number four is party for hardworking and honest people. And number five more jobs for solid middle class. It sounds

like somewhere between the American republican party and the American democratic party.

But right before the April election, the Saenuri party changed their identity, and they also brought in a dramatic change in their policy tones. Number one comes with a welfare state toward citizens' happiness. Number two is jobs for everybody. Number three is fair market economy. Number four is creative education towards fair chances. Number five is social diversity. Security and reunification issues come at number seven and number eight. So we can say that Saenuri has sustained a traditional conservative position on foreign issues and security issues, but they have a dramatic shift on social and economic issues to the left.

This is a joint policy statement by DUP and UPP, which was hastily agreed on just right before the April election. And they contain several interesting points. Number four is important: "The two opposition parties, DUP and UPP, agree on the objection to ROK-U.S. FTA" with equal emphasis on re-negotiation. Somebody would call it re-re-negotiation by the DUP, and the equal emphasis on repeal by UPP. And number five agreement point is they agree to seize the construction of a Jeju navy base. So the opposition parties' ideological position has shifted to the left remarkably, not just on social and economic issues, but also on foreign policy issues.

Let me move on to the second point, the new Parliamentary procedures in the Korean National Assembly. This part might be a little bit confusing to an American audience, but let me tell you about the procedures.

In the last days of the 18th National Assembly, the governing party and opposition party agreed to bring in new procedures within the National Assembly Hall. One noteworthy thing is there is some shift from simple majority rule to qualified majority rule. If they agree on -- if just one-third of the members of one standing committee agreed on a certain bill as a contentious bill, then this bill goes through a separate track. They have 90 days for a coordination subcommittee, and during the 90 days they can agree on revising this highly contentious bill only with two-thirds of the members of subcommittee members' consent, not simple majority. And then they can go to the plenary voting. If not, then this bill goes through the normal track to endless delays and talks and negotiations and going nowhere. So this is an important compromise on the simple majority rule in the National Assembly Hall and its enhanced veto power by the minority party.

Another interesting change in Parliamentary procedure is enhanced institutional protection for filibustering. It used to be it was possible but these days they provide more institutional protection. Only three-fifths of the whole national assemblymen can stop filibustering. Only for budget bills, filibustering is only possible until December 1st. So all in all, the new procedural rules mean enhanced power for the minority party and it compromises a majority bill or

majority rule. So there has been a bombardment by leading newspapers like (inaudible) and the leading newspapers have a bombardment on this issue focusing on the questions of constitutionality of the compromises on majority rule. On and on and on.

So finally, given this ideological shift to the left, especially outpatient parties shifted to the left on foreign policy issues and compromises on simple majority rule, there would be a high chance for gridlock with the National Assembly Hall and between the president and the National Assembly. So the question is if the December election, December presidential election really matters, do we have a unified government or with a consolidated president elected or do we have a divided government with a liberal president elected?

If we have a divided government, then there will be medium level and low level gridlock between the president and the National Assembly. But if we have a divided government, then there will be a medium and high level of gridlock between the president and the National Assembly with new rules. As you see, we have diverging views on foreign policy issues between the governing party and minority party. And as you know, we have famous strong party lines within the National Assembly hall and we have a notorious lack of politics or procedures by the president. So it all depends on the December election and the outcome will decide the level of gridlock between the president and the National Assembly and its implication for the future of ROK, USFTA, and other security cooperation and other foreign related issues.

I will stop here. Thank you. *(Applause)*

DR. BUSH: Thank you very much. As a former employee of the House of Representatives, I'm sorry to hear that the Korean National Assembly is looking more like our Senate. *(Laughter)*

We would now like to call on Dr. Kang Choi of the IFANS to talk about North Korea.

KANG CHOI: Thank you, Dr. Bush. I would like to thank the organizers for giving me such a wonderful chance to make a presentation in front of distinguished scholars and experts in this arena.

After hearing such a comprehensive and thoughtful presentation of Dr. Jaung, it is almost impossible for me to add anything else. I can simply say I just concur myself with all the points he raised in his presentation. But I would like to skip some overlaps and then I would like to highlight some additional points, especially the policy recommendation.

Personally, I think the future on the current peninsula is not that bright, at least in the short-term period. And I don't know whether it's possible to solve the North Korea nuclear problem in a short period of time because it is

closely linked to the regime itself. So it is wise for us to think about rather a middle to long-term approach toward North Korea to solve the problem.

Secondly, we will be faced with more problems than ever before. In my presentation, I illustrated four types of problems or challenges ahead of us - conventional set of North Korea, WMD, leadership succession, and possibility of instability of North Korea. And finally, the human security inside North Korea. All dimensions actually combined together present a very serious challenge ahead of us.

Let me start with the conventional security threats. So it is a multiplicity and complexity of the North Korean challenge is the reality. I don't know whether we will be able to handle that situation correctly or not, but actually, there is a close -- there must be a close consultation and coordination between all the concerned parties. So let me start with conventional problems. These are just figures just for your reference. I always skip this part. This is a picture of Cheonan. You may recall the incident took place in our territorial water. And this is an area the Yeonpyeong shelling took place. I don't know whether you're been to Yeonpyeong Island. I was there. You will be shocked by seeing the scenery of the shelling. It was a civilian, actually, population center, not the military facility at all.

What I can draw from these two instances, North Korea has developed the strategies or tactics to use its conventional forces for political as well as military purpose. It will continue to do so. Unfortunately, we have underestimated their capability or their imagination to use their conventional forces in achieving their political goals. They will keep doing so and they will continue to develop other strategies to fully utilize the conventional forces. I don't know whether their conventional forces will erode or not, but I think they will do whatever they can do to maintain a certain level of forces. I don't know whether they will be able to modernize, upgrade conventional forces but I think they can manage a certain level of forces effectiveness.

So this is only 40 kilometers away from the DMZ but we have forgotten that reality. So I think this is a moment of realization of the security situation South Korea is faced with. And also, now they are talking about a cyber attack from North Korea as we are becoming more digitalized and information technology is booming, we have become more vulnerable or North Korea's attack in cyberspace.

Let me turn to the WMD challenges because all those figures -- and let me skip this part. Actually, we are having three problems. One is how we are going to contain the further proliferation. That is our first challenge.

The second challenge -- how we are going to change our response to the nuclearized North Korea. As Dr. Jaung already mentioned, North Korea has a strong incentive to keep the nuclear weapon system as far as it can, so

actually this would be the reality to be with us for a relatively long period of time. Since North Korea has shifted its program from repossessing a uranium-based enrichment program, I think North Korea will be able to produce more uranium for weapon production, as well as for sales. So I don't know whether it's possible for North Korea to sell their weapon-grade uranium to other countries or other non-state actors but you cannot rule out the possibility.

It is paralleled by the development of missile capability which will enable North Korea to deliver its WMD somewhere else. After all, they are in the process of upgrading and modernizing a wide range of missile capabilities. So that actually presents a very serious challenge upon us and undermines not only South Korea's security but also the other consenting parties, like Japan and the United States. I don't know when North Korea will be having the capability to strike the mainland U.S., but actually at some point in time it will be able to do so. That actually undermines the deterrence posture of South Korea as well as the United States. Since having the missile launch or the nuclear test, we doubted this reliability or credibility of U.S. extended deterrence vis-à-vis South Korea. So we are in a process to upgrade our deterrent posture vis-à-vis North Korea, but actually it is so much more complicated than it used to be.

So we have to think about various ways of deterring North Korea from using its military forces in various situations. We should become more imaginative. We should put ourselves in North Korea's shoes and then devise a way to deal with North Korea's WMD challenges. The problem is there are differences among ourselves. Actually, we share all the denuclearization stability, and peace on the Korean Peninsula, but there are differences on the priority. It seems to me that China is preoccupied with maintaining the status quo, preventing any kind of unstable situation or conflict on the Korean Peninsula. In the meantime, the United States is pretty much concerned with nonproliferation issues, the proliferation possibility which would be carried out by North Korea. On the other hand, actually, South Korea is relatively nowadays preoccupied with the conventional threat coming from North Korea. So unless we coordinate our priorities of concerns, it would be quite difficult to solve the problem.

Now it is much more complicated and also undermines the basic foundation of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. I don't know how we can handle or how we can get out of this mess, but anyway, actually, we should stay together in devising the way to handle North Korea's challenges ahead of us. It is much more complicated than it used to, but anyway, we must do our best, first of all, in containing and also in solving the problem.

Let me turn to the leadership succession issue. Personally, I think North Korea is relatively stable at this point of time, but as time goes by there are more sources of instability. Right now I think the North Korean regime is politically stable, economically unstable, socially unstable. But as time goes by we will see more sources of instability in the economy and social strata. So I don't know how we can handle that issue but we should be able to handle the multiple sources of instability of North Korea. But right now North Korea looks

stable because of a sense of urgency shared by the top elite. So it will be maintained that period of time. It also depends on how Kim Jong-un consolidates his power base. It seems North Korea has prepared the power transition since the stroke of Kim Jong-un in 2008. So I think they are in the process of implementing the plan they have planned before.

What kind of policies changes can you expect at this point of time? I don't see any possibility of policy change coming from North Korea since Kim Jong-un simply inherited all the policy lines actually launched by Kim-Jong-il. So unless he has his own power base completely concerning his powers, he won't be able to launch a new policy line. So we will see the same North Korea, at least, I don't know, maybe two to three years or five years. In Kim Jong-il's case, it took three years for him to launch a new policy, what he calls songun, "military first" policy. So until that time, we have to be very careful about the possibility of policy change. Kim Jong-un spent some time in Europe, so he might be more open-minded and reform oriented. I don't think so. There is a limit of his room to manipulate, to have his own policy. So we will be very careful in handling or in coping with those challenges under the Kim Jong-un leadership.

So at this point in time, as I said, there is no possibility to see any kind of political instability, but as time goes by there could be a split among the top leaders of the policy choice than could be escalated into the power struggle. But that I don't think will happen in a short period of time. But there is lots of thought going on about the instability or implosion case, but the problem is we have been discussing this issue at the government level, but actually we should be more imaginative in devising the way to handle this North Korean situation.

But anyhow, we will be ready to handle this very challenging issue. It is a totally different challenge if North Korea collapses, but we have to be very careful about what we are saying. A regime collapse or state collapse or nation state collapse and how we are going to handle it. It could happen overnight or it could take gradually. So we have to think about various scenarios of implosion in North Korea.

And finally, let me touch on the human security issue. We have a very benign -- actually, we have not talked about this issue very often. We only talked about North Korea human rights issue, but actually, if you look at the human security issues in North Korea you will be shocked -- infant mortality, the house system, malnutrition, and also the environment issues. All these issues will present a tremendous challenge ahead of us. So that leads us to engage North Korea people-to-people, not at the government-to-government level. We have to separate our approach to the North Korean regime, North Korean leadership from our approach to the North Korean people.

These are just figures. We have political prisons in North Korea and this is an environment issue, environmental disaster, actually. Top soil is washed away. Actually, it is a chronic occurrence of floods and drought in North

Korea. We will be seeing the same situation every other year or every year. I don't know whether this year will be okay or not; we'll see. And this is the food insecurity of North Korea. Actually, the northwestern part of North Korea is the worst area in terms of food security. And infant mortality skyrocketed in 2008 and 2009 because of the malfunctioning of the health care system in North Korea. A whole generation of North Korean young people just gone. Actually, if you look at the height, the average height of North Korean young generation age 20-30, you will be shocked. The average height is about 165 centimeters. I don't know how I can put that into feet, but anyway, 5'4", something like that. Anyhow, this is a figure.

Let me come to the policy options. Actually, the Kim Jung-un regime would not launch a policy change at all, and domestic political concerns are a predominant issue as well in North Korea. And also North Korea is determined to keep its nuclear weapons and wants to be recognized as a nuclear power as engraved in new constitution. This is a very significant way for North Korea to announce itself as a nuclear power state.

So basic directions, actually a security-based approach is very necessary for us at this point of time and also we have to be able to enhance our deterrent posture denying, containing, and engaging North Korea. Those are the three elements I put forward for policy consideration. And also, we have to strengthen the collaboration among the directly concerned parties as well as China. Of course, how we can bring China into our own circle is a quite challenging one, but I think there will be a way to do so. There could be a positive way; there could be a negative way. But the negative way can stage more military exercises in and around the Korean Peninsula, make China more concerned about the Korean situation, and then put more pressure up on North Korea in a negative way, but in a positive way, bring China into more dialogue and also find a common understanding of North Korea.

Over the years we have been discussing about the ways to handle the North Korean issue but unfortunately, we have not been able to consolidate the kinds of mental background of our approach in handling North Korea. So I think it is a good time for us to think about the in-depth strategic dialogue in enhancing the understanding of the nature of the problem, how we should interpret North Korea, how we should interpret the new leadership. That will become more beneficial background for devising the policy to be implemented into the future. And also, we have to be able to enhance our capability or readiness to handle the contingency. We can think about various contingencies in North Korea. So, for your reference I think you will be able to see these things.

And also, finally, I would like to touch on how we are going to engage the North Korean people actually. We should do our best to improve their daily lives. So instead of going big project, maybe to think about a people-to-people project and NGOs activities, and also, we need to have Chinese cooperation in promoting the NGOs' activities because we have to clearly state

our position on the human security issues in North Korea. Thank you. (*Applause*)

DR. BUSH: Thank you, Dr. Choi for your usually clear and hard-hitting analysis. We now turn to Professor Chaesung Chun from Seoul National University, who will talk about the changing power structure in East Asia. Dr. Chun.

CHUN CHAESUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I am doing in this presentation is to introduce some long-term policy plans for South Korea. There are many discourses and concepts these days in South Korea. What kind of long-term policy and strategy we should have, especially before the presidency election. There are many discourses burgeoning in South Korea.

South Korea, as we know, has done a lot, you know. We achieved some economic development, political democratization, and growing cultural influence. However, if we look at the security situations or general international politics, still I think South Korea is a relatively weak state, or at most, middle power because have all four great powers in the region. And South Korea, in the past years, it is very hard to have long-term policy plans because it was not sustainable. We didn't have sufficient policy means. But maybe South Korea, with all these achievements as a base, might have some long-term policy plans. So to think about that we can look at South Korea's perception of the changing international order. As you know, in East Asia, there are many things happening. So how is South Korea perceiving these kind of changes? How can we articulate visions, conceptualize visions for the future policy, maybe for the coming decade?

Some tasks. So I will categorize some areas, policy areas, including the alliance, relations with China, middle power initiative and East Asian multilateralism. So I think we need a lot of comments from the American friends -- what kind of policy plans that South Korea should have.

One of the most impending concerns for South Korea is power transition in this area, not just to South Korea but maybe many East Asian countries in the region. We have only a balance of power system. It's a bit of an academic concept. It means that we lack any formidable, multilateral mechanisms to regulate or solve the international conflicts and disputes. And also, we have the power transition phenomenon as well, which is composed of the rise of China it is obvious, reinvigoration of Russia maybe. They have their own, these days, their own concept of the reengagement with East Asia. Very controversial, but the decline of the U.S. Maybe temporarily the weakening of Japan, two Korea's inter-Korean relations, and Taiwan. So we don't know what kind of ultimate outcome we will have in East Asia, but it is obvious we are having this kind of power transition without any multilateral mechanism to regulate this kind of power transition.

Usually, in power transition theory, this kind of transition will lead to some hegemonic war or the clashes between the existing power and the rising

powers. This will be tragic to middle powers, like South Korea, because we don't have any policy means to prevent this from happening. So what we want to do is give some input in great power relations. Try to evade the so-called "clash of Titans," however, there are so many theories of the future relations between the U.S. and China. What I am concerned is some kind of over-theorizing of relations. There are many pessimistic or the so-called offensive, realistic type of predictions that the clash, or maybe the hard competition is inevitable. So there is some theoretical prediction about the future.

And then this presses us to choose which side you're with. This kind of inevitability of choice for middle powers or weak powers. I think this is an unhappy situation. So we can pursue staged proposals as relations between the U.S. and China are developing. So we have to evade this kind of over theorized prediction between two powers. The South Koreans are concerned about that. You know, if there are some arguments, that you should choose which side you are with, this kind of thing. U.S. policies, there are many discourses if you look at U.S. documents -- retrenchment, reengagement, revitalization, rebalancing.

And these two countries, we have already established U.S. architectures in the areas of security, economy, and identity, but China tries to have their own identity, which might be opposed to the American ones. Between these two South Koreans see some discrepancies. We are heavily dependent upon the U.S. We are benefitted by our relations with the U.S. for the past years in terms of security, and also in terms of the economy. But as we know, more and more South Korea is dependent upon the economic relations with China, so these kinds of discrepancies between regional economic architecture and security one.

We have very old identity politics or territory disputes, all these things. Theoretically, we have some overlapping problems that are handed down from the traditional and imperialist period. So East Asia can be defined by these complex organizing principles at the same time.

So with all these problems, we have one more, which is inter-Korean relations. As Professor Choi said, we have to deal with North Korea, and now we have a new leader in North Korea. So we have to anyway, establish strategic relations with Kim Jung-un's North Korea. What kind of relations should we have?

And we have to normalize North Korea and try to find a place for North Korea in the future picture in Northeast Asian politics. Then we should find some options how to change Kim Jong-un's "military first" national strategy. And this kind of task should be integrated into our regional policy in dealing with this power transition.

In search of several Soviet data -- this is the one done by the East Asia Institute last year -- there are several very interesting ones, so I will briefly introduce some of them. How do you predict your country's relations? So there

are Chinese public and Chinese scholars, Korean public and Korean scholars. Those are the respondents. And U.S. If you look at U.S., Chinese think that the U.S.-China relations will improve anyway, more than 80 percent. If you look at Korean public and scholars, more than 90 percent think that U.S.-South Korean relations will improve. Japan, well, there are some negative perceptions between South Korean and Chinese all together, but if you look at this one, Chinese, even though they think that they will have improved relations with the U.S., but China, they think it will surpass the U.S. in the future, more than 50 percent. So at least in the Chinese mind there is a phenomenon of power transition which will be reflected in Chinese policymakers plan in the future.

So visions. There are many arguments in South Korea but let me summarize the visions in these terms. First, the middle power diplomacy, which is also a relative term. So many powers accept advanced countries and weak countries. All these countries are middle powers. And so how to define middle power is another problem. Maybe we'll have a chance to talk about that in the current session. The middle power tries to evade the tragedy of great powers' clash. So the middle power does not oppose any specific great power, but middle power thinks there are some pitfalls or tragedies in great powers' way of thinking. For example, if there are some small events happening in East Asia, for example, then great powers tend to interpret this as a strategic event, so they want to have the upper hand in every country. So middle powers can have some roles of facilitating cooperation or interpreting in a different way.

And middle powers want to, like South Korea, have a multilevel mechanism which can replace the balance of power among the great powers which might be termed as a network, regional, a multidimensional network which we can call a complex network. New governance. It could be reunification but before reunification we might have some new governance of coexistence and cooperation on the peninsula. A global middle power role is very important because South Korea tries to import some global norms into Northeast Asia so that we can maybe socialize Chinese behavior on the basis of these global norms like we did with the G20 or the Nuclear Summit Meeting.

And how to find some social support inside South Korea? That is also a very important task which is very difficult. If we go to the country issues, also there is some survey data following countries' effect on national security. If you look at Chinese answers, then generally they think the U.S. influence is negative, more than 50 percent. South Korea thinks that more than 80 percent U.S. influence is positive in terms of security. The interesting thing is that Japan is viewed as negative in both Chinese and Korean thinking. South Korea is viewed as no effect or somewhat positive by Chinese. So these kinds of changes are happening.

With these, what kind of tasks does South Korea have in terms of foreign policy? I will say we have to enhance systemic flexibility to observe power transition. These are academic words. But if we can have some systemic

arrangement to observe a power transition between U.S. and China or the different countries in that region, then we can have a peaceful adjustment of power shift with new institutions. In this sense, institutions are important. They should not be competitive. The regional institutions should have functions to observe these conflicts and competitions. And we have to lessen great powers' mutual strategic mistrust. There are so many discourages, strategic mistrust or distrust. There are some reports from the China Center at Brookings as well, how to evade this kind of tragedy of greater powers' offensive realism? There are some concrete ways what South Koreans can do in later slides.

And the most important asset for South Korea, even though we pursued the middle power policy ease alliance with this alliance, but with a little bit more expanded functions and roles we can use, make full use of this alliance in pursuing our future foreign policy. China, I think China is still an authoritarian regime but it becomes pluralized. There are so many different actors having different voices, so we might try to have multilevel strategic network with China. So try to have some global norms in the region. Middle power is cooperation, so we can cooperate with other middle powers with the same purpose, how to evade this kind of greater powers' competition.

I will go fast. The middle power strategy. Functionally, we can define convener, broker, brokerage, you know, to try to have connections, like hunters were to civilizations. The East Asian Chinese world order and the American type of hegemony. But South Korea in the middle can have a deeper understanding of both and try to have a mechanism of facilitating cooperation between these two.

Architectural partner. So we don't want to be asked by these two powers which side you're on but we want to transform this balance of power-type mechanism in the region, try to lead it to more cooperative, maybe post-modern or, you know, more cooperative organizing principles.

These kinds of middle power strategies, we have a positive public perception of future South Korea's role, except military power. You know, (inaudible) scholars see that South Korea's power is still lacking, more than 40, around 50 percent. Some negative perceptions of democracy, maybe what is happening in South Korean politics, but except these three areas, we are confident that now we are entering into the period of middle power.

And then ROK-U.S. alliance. Okay. So we should have some broadened view of ROK alliance rather than deterrence and defense against North Korea. China, as I said, we established strategic cooperative partnership but still the contents are not complete. So we have to have more dialogues, but not just government to government, more diverse links in terms of market. Sorry. And middle power initiative. Well, there are so many middle powers but I think that there are differences also in perceptions among the middle powers and we have the problem of collective action as well.

Last, East Asian community. South Korea. So they have a very strong view about the East Asian community. So this is one policy based on which we can pursue East Asian communities as a policy option. China is also positive but not that much in comparison with South Koreans.

So, East Asian policy. Even though we have some version of East Asia, still, we don't have a very coherent regional policy that every nation state can agree with so this might be one vision for South Korea's policy.

Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

DR. BUSH: Thank you very much. We've had three very rich presentations. We are now going to have two equally rich but brief comments from Balbina Hwang from Georgetown University, and then Chris Nelson.

BALINA HWANG: Good morning. It's a great pleasure for me to be here. You know, it's very much in vogue to talk about how wonderful the alliance is these days. The last couple of years everybody has been beaming about it. But we should remember that hasn't always been the case. And certainly, our two political leaders, President Obama and Lee Myung-bak deserve a lot of credit for the state, the happy state of the alliance it is today.

But it is actually behind the scenes, the work and institutionalization of the relationship through forums such as this whole Washington forum that has been going on now for six years. And so actually, a lot of credit goes to the Korea foundation for sponsoring this, and also Brookings, and all of the esteemed participants of this forum. So I certainly think that it's a wonderful forum. And also necessary because as we undergo leadership changes it's unclear exactly what direction the relationship will go.

Now, I have the very daunting task of being a discussant for these three excellent papers. And the reason it was daunting is they were so rich and really all so excellent that I certainly don't have any criticisms. At first glance, the papers seem very disparate. They seem focused on three very different topics, but in fact, the organizers in their infinite wisdom actually put them together for a very good reason. And so I'm going to try to bring out some of the interconnected themes and its implications for the U.S.-ROK alliance and broader bilateral relationship.

Now, Dr. Jaung's paper was an excellent study and with very, very useful data. And I encourage all of you to take a much more careful look. Actually, all three papers because they were very rich in their information. What I felt was very interesting was that his observations about the changes in South Korea are actually mirrored here in the United States. He talked about the increasing economic inequality in South Korea and its effects on politics. That's certainly the case here. In fact, in America, this is one of the biggest topics, is this

rising, you know, the loss of the middle class and the growing gap between incomes. Certainly, the decline in trust in government. I would say that is very much a big problem in American society. It's actually a big problem all around the world, not just in other democratic post-modern societies. You see this all over Europe. But even in China, frankly. And in Japan it's also a very significant problem.

And finally, Dr. Jaung was talking about the very interesting shift in liberal ideology in the electorate. Now, here I'm certainly no expert on U.S. domestic politics. Obviously, I don't think there has been a shift towards the liberal side, but certainly there is an increase in ideological rhetoric and this very, very deep and bitter partisan politics. And I think that has had a very poisonous and damaging effect certainly on the ability of our political system to operate and function. And so I think Dr. Jaung's conclusion and his question about whether or not in South Korea the next government will be a united or divided government is exactly the same questions we're wrestling with here. And so we have these two developments that are mirror images of each other.

Now, Dr. Choi's paper also, again, I encourage you to take a careful look at his data. They are very interesting and very informative. He talked about the challenges for North Korea and the challenges that North Korea poses for South Korea. Again, what I think is so interesting is, in fact, the challenges that North Korea poses are really a microcosm of global ones that the United States faces. What I mean by that is that North Korea is an enduring threat precisely because of both the conventional military threat that Dr. Choi so excellent outlined, as well as these nonconventional threats which he also provided rich data on. But these are precisely the reason why for the United States North Korea is essentially a global problem and why actually North Korea is a global problem for the rest of the world as well.

North Korea's participation in WMD proliferation, cyber warfare, all sorts of illicit activities, and especially this really important point that Dr. Choi was raising about the nature of the leadership and the succession questions and the stability problems that it poses, these are also mirrored in other parts of the world for the United States and are significant challenges. And even this issue of human security, which I think is one of the most important and excellent sort of analytical frameworks of Dr. Choi's. And I think he's exactly right. This is exactly how we should think about the broader North Korean problem as a human security problem.

But note that for the United States this is mirrored in regions throughout the Middle East today. I mean, the Arab Spring produced essentially all of these problems. Just in today's newspaper, Syria, Egypt, Libya, these challenges go on and on and on. And so the irony or the paradox is that while North Korea has chosen a path of isolation -- we often say North Korea is the most isolated country in the world -- well, yes, it is. But its threats are actually globalized. And North Korea has interestingly decided to globalize it through its

purposeful connections to other countries that are global problems. So its connections to Iran, Syria, Burma, Saddam Hussein's former Iraq, this makes it a much more global problem. And it is quite ironic for a very isolated hermit kingdom.

And finally, Dr. Chun's paper. I thought, again, another excellent paper, also very, very rich data which I'm going to have to go back and carefully look at. I'm sure I'll cite much more in the future in my own work. But he also highlights a very important theme, and this is that about the ROK's changing perceptions of the regional order and South Korea's position in the regional order. I couldn't agree more, but note that it's not just about the regional order but it's about the global order and South Korea's changing perceptions about its place globally.

Now, I would say that, you know, I think one of President Lee Myung-bok's lasting legacies -- and you know, we'll be reading about this in 50 years -- well, if I'm lucky I'll still be here -- 50, 100 years from now in history books -- his lasting legacy will be his launching of Global Korea. And I do think this will be a turning point in Korea's history about Korea's position in global society. But we should also remember that it is actually not new. As much credit as I give to President Lee, in fact, it's Minister Han Sung-Joo, who is sitting right here. He actually launched this under President Kim Young-sam some 20 years ago under the Segyehwa policy. So if you go back and actually read Minister Han's work, he really established sort of the philosophical principles of this global policy for Korea.

The important thing is that fundamentally -- so while South Korea's perception about itself in the region and the globe has changed and its position and its activities, what has fundamentally not changed are the way South Korea prioritizes its issues. And I would argue that that will never change. Now, typically, Korea has always thought about issues, international issues, from the perspective of the peninsula. So they address all issues as its effects on the peninsula first and foremost, then its effects on the region, and finally, its effects globally. Now, there is nothing wrong with that, and in fact, it's quite understandable and logical by Korea as a small country with its long history of being essentially a victim of its geography, would exactly prioritize its national interests in that way.

The problem is that the United States does it exactly the opposite. Right? For the United States, we've always thought about international issues first, globally, then its effects on the regional order, and then finally, local effects. So for every single issue that the U.S. and the South Koreans face together, it's always been in reverse priority. Now, again, you know, I certainly think that it's correct and proper for the United States to think in these terms because we are, after all, a global power. However, it's when these two allies address the same issue with these different priorities, we may have the same goals and interests, but because the priority emphasis is different we are often at odds. And so you start

to see these kinds of very different approaches get manifested, and that's when you start to see problems in the alliance. And in fact, despite the fact that today's relationship is probably the best it's been in a very long time, in fact, underlying this we do have serious disagreements. And it will lead to friction.

So currently, the civil nuclear agreement that's under negotiation, the missile range issues, and myriad other issues are always approached from this angle. And because of that I think the two allies often find themselves very much at odds. And I think this is an enduring challenge that we will continue to face regardless of the changes in leadership in the future.

And so I think that all three papers provide an excellent way of addressing each of these issues. So I'll leave it with that.

DR. BUSH: Thank you, Balbina, that's great. (*Applause*)

DR. BUSH: Chris, you have the last word.

CHRIS NELSON: Thanks. I'm going to take the last word sitting down because it's always easier.

Balbina's presentation was really rich in itself and I really appreciate hearing it because it saves me from saying a lot of things that I had planned to say.

Obligatory thanks to the Korean Foundation and to Brookings for arranging this. But I have to note, I came into the Korea business as a young Asia Affairs Subcommittee staffer in 1977. And at that time talking about Korea meant two things. You'd talk about North Korea and you'd shake your fist rhetorically, if not else. And you'd meet with American human rights activists who would complain about our military alliance with a military dictatorship in Seoul. And, of course, at the beginning of the Carter administration you had to worry about Carter's incredible unilateral decision that he's going to pull the troops out. The first thing Dick Holbrooke ever said to me -- this is when he was then secretary -- was "Chris, you've got to help me undo this stupid announcement by the president." Well, Dick talked that way and he also knew how to flatter a young staffer. You know, first name and we're in this together and stuff. It's a good lesson on government and political types I think when you work with people.

Anyway, my point is if any of you had told me or I told you 35 years ago that we'd be dealing right now with, you know, there's a Korean secretary general of the U.N. and there's a Korean American who just took over the World Bank, and our two economies. Now, of course, and we're so intertwined, we're only going to get more and more intertwined where the president of the United States considers the freely democratically elected president of South Korea his best political friend. Where a guy named Sung Kim

is the American ambassador to Korea, all this, and then as Balbina just pointed out very well, where President Lee has seriously articulated Minister Han's original work with Kim Young-sam on the whole notion of Korea as a global player and security and trade in the environment. And now the world agrees. South Korea has already hosted the G-20 last year and the nuclear summit this year. So this is a very different world. And like I say, if anybody told me that 35 years ago I would have said time to change your meds.

So last but not least, this is the sixth annual conference, not the first. And Richard, I don't know if I should say God willing you're planning the seventh already but again, it's a measure of just how far we've come together and what we need to do.

Well, the thing about some of the panelists we just heard, the obvious stuff, of course, China rising. What the hell are we going to do? North Korea, all the contradictions, absolutely. But we've just got a long thing. Talk about polling in South Korea and the National Assembly elections and who's running for president and what they think of all that kind of stuff. This is Inside Baseball. And, you know, again, we did it not to satisfy academic specialists because now it's a given. We have to know these things. We Americans have to at least be familiar enough with them to ask intelligent questions of our guest panelists. Well, that certainly wasn't the case 35 years ago. So it's a different world. And as Balbina pointed out, we do have to thank President Lee and his buddy, Barack Obama, for really bringing things along in recent years. So that's why I'm thrilled to be here.

What did I learn? I think that's what Richard wants. Balbina has done a great job of quickly summarizing the three panelists. So what I want to do is call attention to Ambassador Han's keynote because I thought it was terrific on every possible level. In the first place, it very thoroughly summed up every in-depth discussion we've had over the last couple of days. I don't know how he did it but he did it. If you were grading the exam the paper would just be a series of checkmarks right down the whole thing. He hit everything that we needed to talk about.

He made a very important point that our relationship, it's at a high point now, sure. But you can't assume it's on autopilot. It is where it is because Obama and Lee were determined and remain determined to keep coordinating. You can't always assume that to be the case as then ambassador Han found out the hard way during the early Bush. Well, I won't attempt to summarize his arguments. You heard them just now. I largely agree with everything he had to say about North Korea, especially his warning that with negotiations not happening. In the past, when our two governments or leaders didn't see eye-to-eye on that trouble ensued. He makes a very interesting point that it's easier for the South Korean people to accept a hard-line policy from their own government than when it's the U.S. being the tough guys and South Korea trying to break the logjams. I want to come back to that.

The bulk of his presentation, as I said, is a thorough look at every conceivable topic, especially on North Korea. He gets into the unknowns and the known unknowns. My God, I'm quoting Rumsfeld. You know, who is this guy Kim Jong-un? His immediate circle? How is he going to evolve as a leader? What are his decisions going to mean for all of us? Very thoroughly discussed. No need to repeat it again. We're all having these conversations and we're all asking the same questions. If we knew the answer, life would be easier.

He put special emphasis on the recent, very worrisome pattern of negative actions. I should say I'm trying to train myself at least to stop using the word "provocation," because I think it leads to a misleading discussion of North Korea motivates and, therefore, our response. But as someone who just flew past the DPRK courtesy of Ariana TV, I will admit being provoked by their attempt to sabotage airline GPS systems.

With the recent outrageously explicit death threats to President Lee and what specific newspapers and TV stations really mean, what the current campaign of North Korean jets buzzing the air defense line, all these kinds of things, again, Minster Han outlines them perfectly. Nothing I can add to that, just we always have to worry about it.

He gets into the China dilemma at great length. Especially China's Beijing's very different definition of strategic interest from that of the U.S. and South Korea and why those differences continue to frustrate all three capitals, really a fourth, Japan as well, of course. Moscow, who know? With Putin, there's always the mischief factor to consider.

Well, we could spend a week on the China conundrum. From my own observation, U.S. policy for 20 years has tried to find a way to get Beijing to grasp that we have a common definition of security risk because of North Korean actions, but we're still looking for a way to get China to see that. So we push North Korea with sanctions but there's no wall behind them. And as Alan Romberg asked earlier this morning, you know, there has to be a better way. If you have it, e-mail me.

Two things that I do worry about coming out of the -- one for the conference and one from the ambassadors -- Mr. Han's presentation. On the conference, it's clear there are rising -- there's a rising consensus amongst all of us who talk about Korea, that our governments must find a way to focus international attention and pressure on North Korea's horrendous human rights practices. That's not new, of course, but what is new, I think, is the growing awareness that we have to find a way to develop a muscular meld of human rights and strategic issues. The two are intertwined. North Korea wouldn't be anything like the strategic threat it represents if the Kim family regime even understood the meaning of a decent respect for human rights, much less to develop and carry out humane policies. So that's my first point.

Hopefully, by the seventh Seoul-Washington conference next year we can -- let's work to make sure panelists discuss what we've been doing about this, not just, gee, we should. And I do want to call attention to this week's really great report by the Committee on Human Rights in North Korea. If you haven't looked at that, Google it. It's really important.

My second point, and this is where I have not a disagreement with Ambassador Han, but it's important. He concludes that -- if I read him correctly, hear him correctly, that the domestic political outcomes in both the U.S. and the ROK this year likely can't or won't substantively change the alliance and the directions undertaken or are now underway because of all that's been done under the Obama and Lee administrations. Well, if there's anybody here who can speak to Governor Romney's statements, let me say everything I've heard so far from the Romney campaign leads me to believe that as president Romney is going to represent a return to the very hard-line attitudes and policies of the Bush administration circa 2002. For example, he called Obama's attempt to negotiate the 229 Agreement, appeasement. And I've seen no apology for that. And the expressed views of his closest known advisors, including Bob Joseph and John Bolton, are not just on North Korea but especially on dealing with China, and Russia, and Iran, all speak to a basic suspicion of, even hostility to Obama policies, especially perhaps policies of negotiations themselves.

Now, he may be right. I don't think so, but that's not my point. My point is, as Minister Han correctly warns, about the risks of policy disconnect between Washington and Seoul. And from all the accounts I've heard, even if Ms. Park is elected, in a Romney administration, the seventh annual conference may find itself with a very different set of discussion topics and a great deal more pessimism about the alliance that we've seen in years. Now, as a democrat, I could suggest an easy way to avoid that risk but probably I better stop now. *(Laughter)* And thank everybody for their really wonderful presentations. Thank you, Richard, especially for including me on this. And thank you. *(Applause)*

MR. NELSON: I wasn't brief, but by God, I talked fast so I got it out.

DR. BUSH: Thank you very much. I apologize for doing such a bad time -- bad job on time management. But we do have time for a couple of questions. And the guidelines are the same. Wait for the mike. Identify yourself. And we'll go for just a little while. The first hand I saw was Kathy Moon's. Right up here.

QUESTION: Hi, I'm Kathy Moon, Wellesley College. Two questions, one for Professor Jaung and one for Professor or President Choi. All these titles changing constantly among the Koreans; we Americans stay pretty static.

One question is I've been doing some research on this and this is not an issue that is discussed much, at least in the United States. But I would like to have your thoughts on the emerging role, political role of defectors from North Korea in South Korean politics and domestic politics and their effect and impact on shaping the discourses around North Korea. I ask this because on the one hand it's a great step forward for Korean democracy; on the other hand, I find it somewhat -- something to be wary about because some of them have -- went to South Korea 16, 20 years ago, and obviously many of them who are vocal are very much of a hard-line view. So I'd like to get your thoughts on that.

And then for President Choi, I had wanted to ask this to Ambassador Han but I didn't get a chance so you are definitely well equipped to answer this. What do you think is President Lee Myung-bok's recent declaration that human rights policies, improving human rights in North Korea should be equal to, if not more important than the nuclear issue? I have been wondering whether it's an admission of failed policies on the nuclear issue, whether he's trying to divert attention somewhere else, or what? I'm not quite sure. Or how seriously the U.S. is supposed to take it? I've asked some American policymakers and they didn't want to answer, so I'd like to get an answer from somebody.

DR. BUSH: Those are great questions. Professor Jaung first.

DR. JAUNG: Thank you. Kathy Moon's question is challenging. Frankly, I'm a layman to this issue, North Korean defector issue and North Koreans -- former North Koreans integration into this society. Actually, frankly, I'm totally layman to this issue. But on the more broad level, there is a noteworthy shift in Korean society in terms of legal, political, and social arrangement to enhance the sensitivity and integrity integrating minorities in various senses. We have many guest workers. We have North Korean defectors and other minorities. And so on some level there has been a serious effort to integrate and to show more cultural tolerance and political tolerance to minorities. And also there are some legal changes to support those efforts.

Recently, as you know, the Saenuri Party appointed a former defector, Dr. Cho Myung-chul into the very high post in the PL list, number three or number four. Some of you know that there was some controversy about that appointment. They were talking about not just the desirability of that sensitivity - - political sensitivity to that list. It was about his representativeness of the minority factor. He was elite. He was very successful in Korean society. He was a director of reunification studies, institute, on and on and on. So there was a question, does he really represent the defector community in Korean society?

So this case represents challenges and also accomplishment of our effort to integrate political and social minorities in our system. So we are trying to do it but we still have a lot of jobs to do. Cho Myung-chul is one case, I believe. Not enough.

DR. BUSH: Dr. Choi.

DR. CHOI: I would like to answer the first and second question. I think the role of defectors in shaping the public opinion inside South Korea is going to be very important because they will be raising human rights issues because they are the real victim of human rights violation of North Korea. I see nowadays that you can see many newspapers and media carry the experience, personal experience in media. So I think they will be more important in shaping the South Korean's understanding the reality of North Korean human rights condition very much. That is why I think they will become very important. Of course, Dr. Cho Myung-chul's role is quite important in delivering that kind of message to the political circle.

On the second issue, of course, I cannot say anything about President Lee Myung-bak's statement. That means actually we are going to take a more comprehensive approach towards North Korea, not just focusing on the military aspect but also the human rights issue and human security issue. Actually, human rights and human security issues are quite challenging. That actually leads how we can earn the hearts and minds of North Korean people. If you are thinking about the future integration and unification between the two Koreas, we should be very concerned with this issue. It is much more equally important to those military challenge endeavors.

DR. BUSH: The lady right there.

QUESTION: Joo-Yun Kim with the Center for Arms Control Nonproliferation. My question is for Professor Choi. Dr. Bush, please jump in at any time.

And that is on the issue of the redeployment of technical nuclear weapons to the Korean Peninsula. And I'm not trying to open a whole can of worms because I know it's quite quiet right now on this issue but I ask because I think it would help the Washington community here to better understand this issue, especially in light of Representative Franks, who recently issued an amendment in the House calling for a study on the feasibility of tact nukes to the Korean Peninsula. So at times we see this issue pop up time to time on both sides of the Pacific.

And so my question is we know the South Korean official and public position on this issue right now but my question is can you please provide us some insight as to what extent this issue is actually being discussed or even considered in the upper tiers of governments? What direction you see this issue taking in the future under the next administration, if this issue will remain a public discussion next year or not. And finally, if it's not tact nukes, what alternative options do we have, especially because the arms control community here is generally of the belief that tact nukes technical is not feasible. And so I would

welcome your opinions. Thank you.

DR. BUSH: Thank you. Dr. Choi.

DR. CHOI: I have no knowledge about what's going on inside South Korean government. But I can give you my personal opinions. It does not reflect any political reality or feasibility of redeployment of tactical nuclear weapons, but actually, that represents the demand for the redeployment of tactical nuclear plans actually present South Korea's concern of North Korean challenges. So even for nowadays some people are arguing we should have our own independent nuclear capability to neutralize North Korea, if you are thinking about North Korea will keep as nuclear weapons as far as they can, there should be a more reliable way to handle that situation. That actually -- that kind of concern is reflected in the argument of reintroduction of tactical nuclear weapons. I don't know whether the United States has available tactical nuclear weapons for redeployment in South Korea. Of course, we have some. You have some tactical nuclear weapons in Germany. Some people, I don't know, I don't want to raise a name, but the people arguing for this are the minority but officially we are not saying that we want to have a tactical nuclear position on the Korean Peninsula. That would open up Pandora's box. Are you ready to lead with nuclear arms both South and North Korea? I think that would be a disaster.

So personally, I don't think that's the proper way to handle those kinds of situations. So alternatively, I think that we have to think about reconfiguration of the USFK. Despite all the nuclear tests and missile tests, the United States has not done anything substantially on the reconfiguring of this nuclear posture on the Korean Peninsula. Let me recall, actually, I think 2002 and 2005, the United States spent \$10 billion to upgrade its posture on the Korean Peninsula. Of course, nowadays, ETPC, Extended Terms Policy Committee is working on the strategy. Instead of talking about some feasible measure right now, we have to think about how North Korea will use its nuclear weapons or conventional weapons for obtaining political and military objective. We have to think about strategy first. Then we can think about the alternative way. Of course, nowadays, the United States is putting more emphasis on offshore deterrents. But actually, offshore deterrents, for some Korean perspectives, is not good enough.

DR. BUSH: Two fingers from Chris Nelson.

MR. NELSON: Yeah. I've been doing some reporting on this when it first came up. When you discuss it with not just administration officials but professional military types and they were talking not so much about the South Korean (inaudible) because we all saw that as sort of a certain potential presidential candidate posturing and showing off and not as a serious South Korean discussion, but of course, our people, our own Armed Service Committee people came up with it. And I have to tell you, the word "idiots" was used quite frequently in discussing the level of thought that went into that element. Nobody takes it seriously.

Having said that, of course, the topic is important. If we're going to be talking about tactical nukes seriously, how can we in the same breath be talking about denuclearization, et cetera. It's a contradiction. And then there's the practical matter. Papa Bush pulled all the tact nukes out in 1991. Putting them back in, even if we had them to put back in, would be a tremendous psychological and strategic decision. It's simply not going to happen. And there's a practical matter. AS we've seen in the Gulf War and the Iraq War now, American conventional bombing capabilities, super J dams and all this stuff, they're so incredibly powerful and incredibly precise. Not to sound callous, you don't need tactics. So just at every level it's just a stupid idea.

However, it's always important to talk through things like this so people get it and that's certainly true. We need to come to trips with the contradiction that the big North Korean threat we think are the nukes of the WMD and the threat, as the Chinese say, is the instability. And for South Korea, the North Korean conventional weapons are quite enough. So it's important to have the discussion. But I don't take it seriously. It's not offered by serious people would be my conclusion.

DR. BUSH: I think with that we have to come to the end. We're running out of time on this room, but I want to thank all of you for coming. I want to thank the presenters and commentators. I want to present all our friends from the Republic of Korea who joined us for the last couple of days. This has been a great session and a great conference. And I personally look forward to the seventh Seoul-Washington Forum. Thank you very much for coming.

(Applause)

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