

Daniel Aum

“Divided Korean Families: Securing the Right to Passage”

Divided families on the Korean Peninsula remain a relic of the Korean War. The two Koreas have arranged 19 official rounds of face-to-face reunions for separated families since 1985. Thousands of other families have relied on lesser known channels to meet either through privately arranged reunions—through unofficial facilitators—or by reuniting in a third party country, after escaping from the north. But as the Korean War generation passes away, and North Korean families that attempt to escape face the risk of forcible repatriation by Chinese security forces into deadly North Korean conditions, time is running out. This presentation 1) outlines the unofficial pathways for family reunions, i.e., private channels and defections; 2) analyzes the international legal obligations related to facilitating these reunions; 3) presents possible political and legal options to expand these passageways for separated families.

Buheung Hyeon

“North Koreans as Agents of Analysis about North Korea”

The economy and political landscape of North Korea have dramatically changed over the past twenty years. Before the country’s economic hardships in the 1990s, the world had little knowledge about North Korea. Since then, most of the knowledge about North Korea outside of the country has been generated by non-North Koreans. It is necessary to evaluate the changes from a North Korean perspective in order to assess how the society itself has changed. The presentation focuses on North Korean perspectives on three questions: “What has changed in the past twenty years? Why is there no sign of a people’s uprising in North Korea? What are the most effective ways to help common North Koreans?”

Benjamin Silberstein

“Three Years Later: Evaluating North Korea through a *Byungjin* framework”

In March 2013, Kim Jong-un launched the *Byungjin* line as North Korea’s overarching guiding policy. Originally proclaimed by Kim Il-sung in the early 1960s, *Byungjin* is the name for a policy line that advocates parallel development of the economy and defense capacity. North Korea is often described as a stagnant state, but this presentation argues that if one measures outcomes against the goals formulated through the *Byungjin* line, the North Korean regime has in fact made substantial progress on its strategic targets during the past few years. The presentation will rely on North Korean textual sources, quantitative data, as well as personal impressions from the Sino-Korean border.