

## ILC 2021 Session 3 - Examines Relationship of Korea, Japan and the USA

Michael Jenkins  
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**North America** -- The third session of the June 2021 International Leadership Conference for UPF's North America region was titled "Trilateral Relations among Korea, Japan and the U.S."

The June 24 session was one of nine ILC webinars that were held from June 24 to June 29 under the theme "Toward Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula: Peace and Security"

### Speakers

- **Larry Moffitt** (Moderator)
- **Kim Hyung-suk**, Chairman, Institute for Inter-Korean Social Integration; Vice Minister of Unification of Korea (2016–2017); envoy to Inter-Korean Summit with North Korea. \*\*Video Remarks
- **Bruce Klingner**, Senior Research Fellow for Northeast Asia, the Heritage Foundation
- **Greg Scarlatiou**, Executive Director, Committee for Human Rights in North Korea, Washington, DC

### Session Report

**Prof. Kim Hyung-suk**, who was Vice Minister of Unification of Korea in 2016 and 2017, sent a video in which he explained some of the reasons for the historical animosity between Korea and Japan. He spoke of the occupation of Korea that began in 1905 after the Japanese defeated the Russians in Northeast Asia. Even after the liberation of Korea in 1945 following the defeat of the Japanese in World War II, when the two countries became allies, there was always an uneasy feeling and cultural distance between the two nations. He cited the "comfort women" issue and the economic conflict that began in 2018 after a Korean Supreme Court ruled that Mitsubishi of Japan needed to compensate Korea for Korean forced labor during the war.

**Mr. Bruce Klingner** is a respected authority on Korea and Japan. He was the CIA's Korean station chief during the 1994 incidents when North Korea closed its Yongbyon nuclear plant, having gathered enough spent uranium fuel rods to produce a half-dozen nuclear weapons. "We came close to going to war with North Korea, but not as close as we were when Trump was president," he noted. Mr. Klingner praised UPF and its co-founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, for keeping the spotlight of public awareness focused on the security issues of North–South Korea and the growing strength of China.

**Mr. Greg Scarlatiou** is an experienced intelligence and policy scholar on Northeast Asia and is fluent in Korean. He regularly teaches a class at the State Department on Japan and Korea in which he discusses the nature of each country and their differences from one another in culture, government, economics and history. Mr. Scarlatiou's assessment of the rift between Korea and Japan is that it is too wide for those two countries to heal without outside help, preferably from the United States. "For Korean and Japanese politicians to be able to meet together, without drawing criticism from their constituents back home, it's better if the U.S. can be there, so that all three parties are talking," he concluded.

Both Klingner and Scarlatiou's advice for the Biden administration is to stay engaged in Asia, speak often on the issues of the Korean Peninsula, and hold China accountable for every aggression in the region.