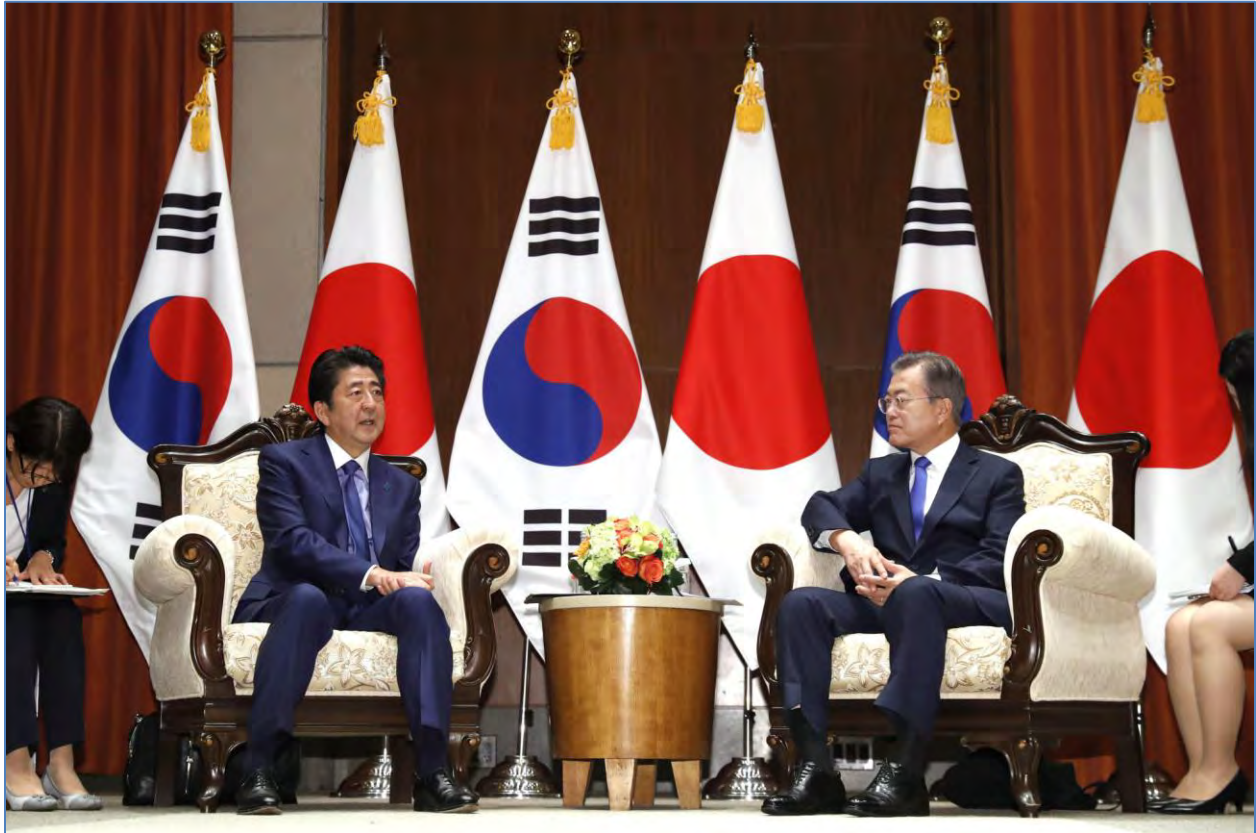


ILC2021 Japan, September 1: Session XI - Japan-South Korea Relations on Security Issues

Masayoshi Kajikuri
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Tokyo, Japan - The Korean Peninsula is inextricably linked with the existence, independence and development of Japan and is under threat from China and North Korea and its nuclear weapons and missiles. Cooperative relations on security issues between Japan and South Korea will increase in significance for responding to those issues.

The eleventh session of UPF-Japan's August-September International Leadership Conference 2021 (ILC2021), held on September 1, addressed "What the Cooperative Relations in Security Matters between Japan and South Korea Should Be." The event, which was co-hosted by the National Forum for Protecting the Peace and Security of Asia and Japan (The National Forum), was attended by around 50 people.

The three featured speakers were Mr. Yasuo Okushi, chairperson of the National Forum and former commander of the Air Defense Command, Japan; Mr. Koichi Furusho, former chief of staff of the Maritime Self-Defense Force; and Mr. Seiichi Hirose, former commander of 10th division of the Ground Self-Defense Force.

The session began with Mr. Masayoshi Kajikuri, chairperson of UPF-Japan, greeting the audience. He then said: "[The significance] of cooperative relations on security matters among Japan, the United States

and South Korea in the relationship between Japan and South Korea, which is separated only by a narrow strip of water, for peace and security of Northeast Asia is indisputable." He added that "There is a recognition that the condition of South Korea, which is physically connected to North Korea and through it to China is not the same as that of Japan and the United States, which are separated from both countries by the sea." Mr. Kajikuri expressed that he looks forward to insights the three speakers will share about how Japan-South Korea relations can be improved and cooperation on security issues between Japan and South Korea or among Japan, the United States and South Korea can be strengthened.

Mr. Okushi, who was the first person to present, spoke about the "Contingency of Taiwan" and said that Japan and South Korea face a common threat. "Both of these nations cannot maintain their defenses individually," he said, and continued, emphasizing that "overcoming the political conflicts and promoting the cooperation in security fields are necessary for Japan and South Korea."

Then, Mr. Okushi held a warning about the alienation works promoted by China, which shows a definite intention to penetrate with Marxism-Leninism, for Japan, the United States and South Korea. He said that "The weakness of China is it not having many [friends] in international society" and underscored the necessity of promoting multilateral security cooperation among Australia, India, the nations of Southeast Asia and NATO.

Mr. Furusho spoke about the relationship between Japan's Self-Defense Force and the South Korean Force, which he said is good on the field level. However, the relationship between Japan and South Korea are often dependent on the positions of the South Korean government.

Mr. Hirose remarked that "The cooperation between the defense of Japan and South Korea has had both good periods and bad periods." However, he said the current situation and the relationship that has been built between both nations could rewind to a bad period. Mr. Hirose underlined the importance of making "a fresh start" for trust to be recovered between Japan and South Korea to "the highest level."