



## Discussing life of average citizens in North Korea

# Secretive North Korea

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By Barbara Grabner

During our successful event about the tradition and ethics in Korean society in February 2018, the audience raised also questions about North Korea. As soon as the summit meeting between president Trump and chairman Kim Jong-Un was announced, UPF Slovakia decided to hold a lecture about living conditions and tensions in North Korean society.

The event “Secretive North Korea” was organized by UPF in close cooperation with the Slovak Society of Futurology, member of the Association of Slovak Scientific and Technological Societies. The venue was the meeting room of the Department of Philosophy of the Slovak Academy of Sciences amid the city center. Already the advertisement aroused considerable interest; far more guests (60) than expected showed up despite the terrible heatwave on June 5, 2018.



At the beginning the chairman of the Futurological Society of Slovakia welcomed the participants and emphasized that the gathering came so timely – one week before the scheduled Trump-Kim summit. The presentation was prepared by Milos Prochazka, PhD who teaches Korean history at the Comenius University. He explained the common heritage as well as the differences between the two states; the many riddles surrounding the strictly controlled everyday life; the prospects for the average citizens after

the long-awaited unification, and more. He evaluated the circumstances for unification as far more difficult as between East and West Germany back then. Dr. Prochazka also showed a short video about a North Korean girl who is asked to express happiness but is not able to do so.

Afterwards an intense Q&A session went on in the audience because some known leftwing ideologists defended the totalitarian state and its measures as mere self-defense against imperialistic America. But more guests felt victimized by the former communist regime ruling the nation until 1989 and said so loudly. One guest who had visited North Korea, depicted depressing impressions from real life he observed there. UPF Slovakia Secretary General Milos Klas was busy to let all sides to be heard!

The guests were also introduced to the excellent book “The Cleanest Race” by B.R. Myers.