



# Meeting with the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea

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On occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Independence movement which took place March 1, 1919 in Seoul, the Czech UPF chapter convened a special meeting and discussion with the ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Czech Republic. This event took place in the Peace Embassy in Prague on the 9th May 2019.

A full room of over 30 people in the audience welcomed the Korean ambassador who gave a very profound and honest lecture about the Independence movement and current situation on the Korean peninsula. He spoke about the Independence movement as a historical event and milestone in the history of the Korean people. He mentioned that in his opinion history must have some direction. Even though Korea does not have material resources it is the unwavering spirit and determination of the Koreans that brought the country among the most developed countries in the world. When we think about the situation after the Korean war when

everything was devastated it is a miracle, said the ambassador.

After the speech there was a very vivid discussion and many questions came from the floor. People usually asked about the traditional values in Korea and especially about the current situation concerning the reunification of the Korean peninsula. The Korean ambassador gave honest answers to all the questions, did not evade any question which together with his humble attitude made a very good impression on the audience.

Concerning the family tradition in Korea the ambassador mentioned that usually the children took care of their old parents. This was some kind of duty. Nowadays, however this trend is slowly disappearing, maybe due to the economic prosperity and the parents are sent to senior houses. This brings loneliness for them.

After the attacks in 2012 from North Korea the people in South Korea realized that there is still a big danger from the North. Many of them decided to join the army voluntarily.

Forgiveness is a very important factor in the process of the reunification and

South Korea is ready to forgive, said the ambassador. The question is who should be punished because many people suffered (defectors, political prisoners). The reunification cannot be based on the communist regime. There are about 30000 defectors in South Korea.

The process of reunification is very complex with many different aspects and dimensions. How to do it in a dignified way and not to hurt the ordinary people? Not only economic questions play important role but also the human and humanitarian aspects are very important, concluded the Korean ambassador.

After more than 2 hours of discussion there was a refreshment of the Korean food which was provided by the Korean embassy in Prague as a contribution to a very successful event.

We can say that this was the best event at the Peace embassy until now and people really liked it. They are interested in the public matters and like to listen to somebody relevant who can bring the information from the first hand.