

UPF Europe and Middle East ILC2021: Executive Summary

Jacques Marion
May 1, 2021

Paris, France—UPF’s Europe-Middle East branch completed an International Leadership Conference focusing on a peaceful future for the Korean Peninsula.

Each of the eight UPF associations organized a session of ILC2021, which was held online from April 26 to May 1, 2021.

A total of approximately 2,000 people attended ILC2021, whose theme was “Toward the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula: Creating the Foundation for a Unified World.”

The prominent speakers included former heads of government and first ladies, parliamentarians, religious leaders, scholars, media professionals, business leaders, and artists. The question of Korea’s peaceful reunification was addressed from various perspectives, and constructive recommendations were proposed.

The ILC2021 was held simultaneously in four other regions of the world: North and South America, Africa, the Asia Pacific Region, and Japan. From around the world, about 300 eminent speakers offered their perspective on the conference theme.

International Association for Peace and Economic Development - IAED WEBINAR

April 26, 2021 – 9:00 CET

Theme: “Toward an Undersea Tunnel Connecting Japan and Korea: Lessons from the Eurotunnel and the Marmaray Tunnel”



The IAED webinar of ILC2021 was held jointly by UPF of Europe and the Middle East and UPF Japan. The moderator, **Mr. Robin Marsh**, secretary general of UPF-United Kingdom, presented the theme and noted that a tunnel between Korea and Japan would have profound effects in East Asia for peace and prosperity.

In his introductory remarks, **Mr. Masayoshi Kajikuri**, the chair of the International Highway Construction Foundation and chair of UPF-Japan, explained the origin of the International Peace Highway Project, which Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, the co-founder of UPF, proposed in 1981 at the 10th International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS) in Seoul. In his vision, the Japan-Korea Undersea Tunnel would be the terminus of international highways. Following the tunnel project’s inclusion in the Japan-Korea Summit in 2010, the foundation seeks to encourage a bilateral agreement between Japan and South Korea on the project and garner widespread support.

Dr. Yoshimitsu Nishikawa, a research fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences of Toyo University in Japan, proposed an undersea tunnel, over 230 kilometers in length, connecting the Japanese island of Kyushu with the South Korean city of Busan. He argued that an undersea tunnel would have a great effect on the economic development of the two countries, facilitating the transportation of tourists and the mutual exchange of energy, and would contribute to peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

Ms. Gözde Dizdar, the vice president of Centrist Asia Pacific Democrats International, Turkey, explained about the Marmaray Tunnel: It is the deepest immersed tube tunnel in the world with a depth of 60 meters, connecting the European and Asian sides of Istanbul across the Bosphorus Strait. The construction by a consortium of Japanese and Turkish contractors had to overcome many challenges, including the seismic design for an earthquake resistance of 7.5 Richter, the high ship traffic (50,000 ships a year), archeological findings and political pressures.

Professor Roger Vickerman, emeritus professor of European economics at the University of Kent in the United Kingdom, spoke about the Channel Tunnel between England and France. Begun in 1987 and opened in 1994, the 50km tunnel system provides two types of services: shuttle trains for cars and trucks between terminals, and through rail services. For passengers, Eurostar high-speed trains link London with Paris and Brussels. As a piece of advice to Japanese participants, Professor Vickerman added that it was important to have clear support from a range of stakeholders, both nationally and locally, to build consensus – and to deal with environmental concerns.

Mr. Jacques Marion, regional co-chair of UPF Europe and the Middle East, ended the webinar by explaining the UPF founders’ vision underlying the Japan-Korea tunnel, which would be the first link of a Great International Highway that would run through China to the west and Russia to the north, helping to create a prosperous East Asian Economic Zone. It then would extend to Western Europe on the one hand, and to the United States and Canada on the other hand, by means of an undersea tunnel at the Bering Strait.

OPENING SESSION WEBINAR

April 29, 2021 – 9:30 CET



The ILC2021 Opening Session was held on the morning of April 29, initiating a series of seven webinars in three days.

Reflecting the UPF approach that peace-making efforts must be rooted in godly values, the session began with invocations from **Reverend Canon Ann Easter** of the United Kingdom, former chaplain to HRH Queen Elizabeth II, and **Sheikh Mohamad Ali Al-Haj Al-Amili** of Lebanon, director of the Imam As-Sajjad Seminary.

Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, the regional co-chair of UPF Europe and the Middle East, emphasized that the webinars are commemorating the UPF founders' visit to North Korea thirty years ago, as well as laying a foundation to launch **Think Tank 2022**, which will consist of multiple expert working groups exploring the issue of peace on the Korean Peninsula.

In his keynote speech, Italian **Senator Pier Ferdinando Casini**, the former president of the Italian National Assembly and the honorary chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, explained that the issue of Korean reunification is an example of the tension between political pragmatism and utopianism. "If reunification in a political sense appears today to be a dream, a convergence of interests that makes the policies of the two countries head in the same direction does not seem to be impossible," he said.

Dr. Claude Béglé, an entrepreneur and former Swiss member of parliament who has visited North Korea, reminded us that the Korean Peninsula is a buffer between the two geopolitical camps led by China and the United States, which are striving for hegemony. He described his experience of the similarities between the people of North and South Korea, who are both hard working and strive for excellence. "People have to learn to forgive each other," he said, "as Germany and France managed to do over time, allowing for European construction."

The Opening Session included a compilation video of UPF's five previous **Rally of Hope** initiatives. The video featured speakers such as H.E. Ban Ki-moon, former secretary-general of the United Nations; Nobel laureates such as former South African President F.W. de Klerk and World Food Programme CEO David Beasley; the co-inventor of Oxford University's COVID-19 vaccine, Professor Sarah Gilbert; and former European Commission President José Manuel Barroso.

Mr. Jacques Marion, the regional co-chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, acting as the moderator, announced the Sixth Rally of Hope scheduled for May 9 and the launch of a global working group of experts called Think Tank 2022, focusing on the issue of peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula.

Dr. Thomas Walsh, UPF International chairman, in a recorded message emphasized UPF's strategic plan to focus on moving the Korean Peninsula toward peace. He mentioned that 120 UPF webinars on this theme had been held over the last three months around the world, and that the peace efforts of the international network of experts will be undertaken in a multi-sectoral manner, with high-level delegations visiting key stakeholder nations once the pandemic allows. He further outlined UPF plans to hold a World Summit in November 2021, commemorating the 30th anniversary of the UPF founders' visit to North Korea in December 1991.

In her founder's message, **Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon**, co-founder of UPF, spoke of the Korean War and the miracle that 16 UN member nations came forward at that time to support South Korea. Tearfully referring to those soldiers, many of whom were in their teens, as heroes of the providence, Dr. Moon said she was determined that they will not be forgotten. Many of those veterans, now in their 90s, expressed that they want to see a

peacefully united Korea, she said. Dr. Moon expressed her desire to see that each of those contributing nations has a monument on which those fallen soldiers' names are inscribed.

[International Summit Council for Peace - ISCP WEBINAR](#)

April 29, 2021 – 11:30 CET

Theme: "The Implications for Europe of the Process toward Peaceful Reunification on the Korean Peninsula - How Can Europe Assist in That Process?"



In his opening remarks, **Mr. Mark Brann**, vice chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East and director of ISCP for Europe and the Middle East, mentioned UPF co-founder Mother Moon's prediction that the process toward the reunification of the Korean Peninsula would start as early as 2022, and that she initiated in 2021 a global interdisciplinary working group of experts to explore and advise on how this could be achieved.

The moderator, **Dr. Werner Fasslabend**, the president of the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy and a former Austrian minister of defense, emphasized that the Korean Peninsula is situated at the epicenter of world politics and draws the interest of the three great world powers.

H.E. Yves Leterme, prime minister of Belgium (2008; 2009-2011), provided four incentives for the European Union and the global community to be more involved in the resolution of conflict on the Korean Peninsula: First, to prevent an outbreak of a second Korean War; second, to prevent North Korea from becoming a nuclear power; third, to help bring about a balance of power in this crucial region of the world; fourth, for the sake of the well-being of the Korean population, especially in the North. The EU should focus on three key elements, he said: denuclearization and non-proliferation; social and economic development; and human rights.

According to **H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik**, prime minister of Norway (1997-2000; 2001-2005), experience shows that imposing one's will on North Korea has not been successful. Instead, he suggested taking a more positive approach, such as the "sunshine policy" initiated by former South Korean President Kim Dae-jung. He proposed that Europe take an approach based on the model of the Helsinki Accords, which led to dialogue and agreements on economic and security cooperation and human rights during the Cold War. Similarly, North Korea could arrive at some agreements fostering development of its economy and its integration into the international community.

Dr. Karin Kneissl, the foreign minister of Austria (2017-2019), spoke of the Iran Nuclear Deal signed in Vienna in 2015 between Iran and the five permanent UN Security Council members, plus Germany and the European Union. "Once the US withdrew from the deal in 2018, North Korea concluded that the US could not be trusted," she said. Now, after a new start in Washington, the negotiations are focusing not only on nuclear restrictions but also on Iran's regional role in the Middle East. Europe, with nations such as Switzerland, Norway, or Russia that have far-reaching diplomatic networks on the Korean Peninsula, could play a larger role in the peace process.

Dr. Alexander Zhebin, the director of the Center for Korean Studies at the Institute of Far Eastern Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, noted that the reunification of Korea will require a long period of peaceful coexistence, during which economic cooperation and security guarantees can build trust between the two countries. "It is easier for North Korea to deal with middle-level powers from Europe," he said. The EU should share its vast experience in confidence-building measures, soften the sanctions imposed on North Korea, and provide humanitarian, financial, and technical assistance, he said.

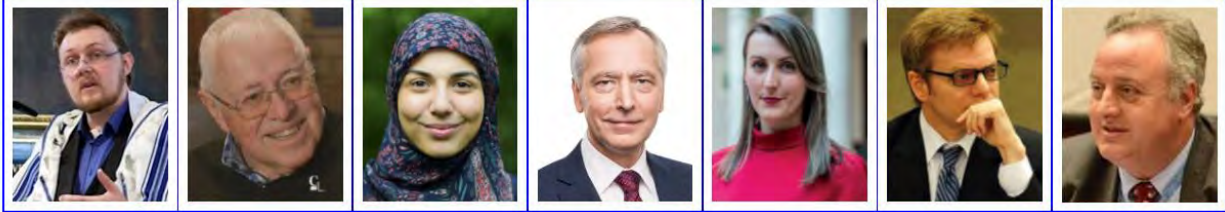
During the question-and-answer session, Dr. Kneissl said that she was doubtful an Asian Helsinki Process could be the answer in the case of the Korean Peninsula. In Europe, Dr. Zhebin added, the Helsinki Process was possible because countries recognized each other, whereas in Northeast Asia there are still territorial disputes, no mutually recognized borders, and no mutually recognized governments.

In closing, Mr. Brann referred to all the changes and developments occurring in Northeast Asia, and said that it was crucial that Europe fully recognizes their implications and does everything in its power to help bring peace in the region.

[Interreligious Association for Peace and Development - IAPD WEBINAR](#)

April 29, 2021 – 14:30 CET

Theme: "The Forgotten Pain of a Divided People – New Prospects for Peace and Reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula"



The webinar was introduced by the moderator, **Rabbi Kevin De-Carli** from Switzerland, president of the GIIA (Geneva Interfaith Intercultural Alliance) Interfaith Youth Council, who called on the speakers to make their initial statements.

Rev. Dr. William McComish, dean emeritus of St. Peter's Cathedral in Geneva, Switzerland, described how the Koreans, being from a family-oriented culture, suffered greatly after their families were divided by the Korean War in 1950. Yet, it is a crime that has been forgotten by the world. One reason for this is that Korea was much less known than Japan or China. Moreover, many inside and outside Korea want to preserve the status quo for their own interests. "Unification will bring challenges, which many people are reluctant to face," he said.

Ms. Batool Subeiti, a peace activist and young Islamic faith leader from Birmingham, United Kingdom, emphasized that the problem should be tackled at the root. "Reunification should be undertaken by the same actors that caused the division, namely the great powers," she said. "And for NGOs to contribute, more political freedom and an easier access to the North are needed, allowing twin villages to be created on both sides and marriages between them encouraged."

Hon. Ján Figel' from Slovakia, a former EU commissioner and special rapporteur on freedom of religion and belief outside the EU, stressed the role of Europe as an inspirational model for many countries in the world. European unity began as the dream of a few people, then became the desire of many, and today is a necessity. To promote Korean unification, leaders offering an inspirational example are needed—not necessarily political leaders. The three-step pattern of "dream, desire, necessity" also can be applied on the Korean Peninsula.

Ms. Emina Frljak, a peace activist and coordinator of Youth for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, gave the perspective of a young person from a nation that is still divided, with a frozen conflict still prevalent despite the declared peace. "The reconciliation in Korea should never be imposed, and the interests of the Korean people should always be considered a priority," she insisted. "Faith and spirituality can be a healing point," she added.

Finally, **Professor Brian Myers**, author and professor of international studies at Dongseo University in Busan, South Korea, gave a profound analysis of fundamental issues, such as the Juche ideology in North Korea, which is perceived as quasi-religious by the Western world. Professor Myers said there is no common ground with religion. That description of the Juche ideology as religious served the vision and strategy of regional political players and was used as a propaganda tool toward the outside world.

In the second part of the webinar the speakers were asked to consider the role of spirituality, faith and religion in fostering peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula. The issue was raised of the need for a type of Marshall Plan on the Korean Peninsula. Hon. Ján Figel' reminded us that in the 1970s, long before the fall of the Iron Curtain, a series of dialogues between Eastern and Western Europe had begun known as the Helsinki Process. This led to real cooperation and later to the integration of Eastern Europe. He suggested that a similar process would be helpful on the Korean Peninsula.

In his closing remarks, **Mr. Heiner Handschin**, the coordinator of IAPD for Europe and the Middle East, reminded us of the UPF founders' call for an interreligious council at the United Nations, which could be very effective in areas of conflict. He added that the UN needed to be more involved in East Asia, where it lacks representation, although 60 percent of the world's population live in that region. He called for the establishment of a fifth UN office on the Korean Peninsula at the Demilitarized Zone, which would arouse a broad interest around the globe for sustainable peace in that region.

[International association of parliamentarians for peace - IAPP Webinar](#)

April 29, 2021 – 16:30 CET

Theme: "The Role of Parliamentarians in Contributing to Peace on the Korean Peninsula"



At the opening of the webinar, the moderator, **Ms. Maria Nazarova**, the president of UPF-Russia, raised three questions: Can Europe contribute to peace on the Korean Peninsula? What role can be played by Russia, which connects Europe and Northeast Asia? Can parliamentary diplomacy help to move forward the long-awaited peace process in this conflicted region?

Mr. Peter Haider, the president of UPF-Austria, explained in his welcoming remarks about the UPF founders' vision and their efforts to reunite their homeland of Korea, as well as the need for the international community's firm support.

Dr. Michael Balcomb, the regional chair for Europe and the Middle East of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF, stressed that because the Korean conflict resulted from a clash of global forces, the reunification of the Korean Peninsula should be the world's concern. "Although the Korean people may believe that the conflict is for them to resolve, many examples show how the sustained peace and security of peoples and nations depend on support from the world," he said. "If we can work together," he concluded, "major unresolved conflicts of the 20th century could be brought to an end."

Hon. Gadzhimurad Omarov, a member of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, emphasized that we live in an age when nations need to put aside their own agendas and focus on peace, safety and security for all. He saw in a recent trip to Africa how the people are suffering from repercussions of civil war, and he could relate to the situation on the Korean Peninsula. "Commemorating 30 years of diplomatic relations with South Korea, Russia is making all efforts to assist peaceful reunification," he said.

In his recorded presentation, Italian **Sen. Roberto Rampi** expressed his conviction that interdisciplinary work is essential to facilitate the process of dialogue and reunification on the Korean Peninsula. He suggested that cultural tools such as art and sports are peaceful means to break down barriers.

Hon. Keith Best, a former member of Parliament of the United Kingdom and UPF-UK chair of the Board of Trustees, spoke of the responsibility of the European Union in easing tensions on the Korean Peninsula, confident that parliamentarians should play a significant role in the dialogue. "Not representing their governments," he said, "they have more freedom to examine areas of interest, with fewer diplomatic consequences. Their capacity to ascertain real issues of contention allows them to provide more information than even sophisticated intelligence services."

Baroness Sandip Verma, a member of the House of Lords of the United Kingdom, said that, in her experience, collaboration of thought, solutions, practices, beyond political differences, has brought the best success in all governments in the past. "The COVID-19 global crisis requires a global response, but miscommunication and lack of shared interest between countries have made apparent the rifts throughout the world today," she said. "It is urgent to improve the management of relationships across all borders," she concluded.

International Media Association for Peace - IMAP WEBINAR

April 30, 2021 – 9:30 CET

Theme: "The Role of the Media in Contributing to Peace on the Korean Peninsula"



In her welcoming remarks as moderator, **Ms. Rita Payne**, former Asia editor at BBC World News (TV) and president emeritus of the Commonwealth Journalists Association, pointed out that, despite the declining trust in the media due to the "fake news" phenomenon, the media have been a crucial part of the network of democratic institutions that have helped maintain peace in Europe. The IMAP conference, she said, aims to create a coherent picture of the role of the media in possible reunification efforts on the Korean Peninsula.

Mr. Thomas McDevitt, chairman of The Washington Times newspaper in the United States, drew attention to the current disruptions in the world—e.g., the questioning of social norms, the shift in the Atlantic-centered civilization, or the global COVID-19 pandemic – and to how vital it is for the media to report the news "with accuracy, fairness and relevance" in this regard. He stressed the role of IMAP in this task, as the organization's main purpose is to encourage the development of a responsible global media industry.

Mr. Masahiro Kuroki, president and CEO of the Sekai Nippo newspaper in Japan, said that the historical experiences of reunification in Europe could serve as a model for Korea. The mission of the media is to clarify the political, economic and cultural nature of the conflict. Referring to the recent US presidential elections, he outlined how the appearance of new forms of media, such as YouTube or social networking services, can make media coverage strongly questionable and create confusion. "Both old and new media need to reflect upon themselves," he concluded.

Professor Toshio Miyatsuka, founder and president of the Miyatsuka Korea Institute, explained how as a Japanese man he was exposed at a young age to the conflict between North and South Korea, and later joined the Japan-DPRK Society. He cited the propaganda war going on, with leaflets dropped off above one country by the other as the main weapon. "They are often referred to as 'flying paper bombs,'" he said, "providing North Koreans with a different perspective and are therefore considered to have great potential in unification efforts."

Mr. Lutfi Dervishi, a journalist and political analyst, born in Albania, a country previously known as the "North Korea of Europe," said that he was familiar with the communist perspective on the media. Today, he said, Albania has evolved from a North Korean state model to one more resembling the South Korean model, with journalism shifting from propaganda to free media. Yet, a new form of media war is developing in the world, no longer fought based on facts, but on opinion. "A shift is needed from business journalism to truthful journalism," he said.

Mr. Humphrey Hawksley, a commentator and broadcaster and longstanding BBC foreign correspondent, elaborated on the fact that the media thrive on conflict, and therefore examining their role in bringing about peace is not an easy task. It is further complicated by the ever-diversifying nature of the media, from blogs to social media and other outlets. "Regarding the geopolitical aspect of the Korean Peninsula," he warned, "it is crucial that unification endeavors to gain a larger consensus among nations, since without such consensus it can become the scene of proxy wars between ideologies, that can hinder all efforts at peacemaking."

International Association of First Ladies for Peace - IAFLP WEBINAR

April 30, 2021 – 11:30 CET

Theme: "Peaceful Reunification on the Korean Peninsula: Women in International Peace-Making and Reconciliation Processes"



Ms. Carolyn Handschin-Moser, IAFLP coordinator and vice president for Europe of the Women's Federation for World Peace International, an organization that is affiliated with UPF, welcomed the panelists, saying that there are many women leaders in our region with a wealth of experience in dealing with conflicts and peace processes, thereby acquiring critical tools that are applicable everywhere.

In her opening remarks, **Dr. Julia Moon**, the president of Women's Federation for World Peace International, praised UPF co-founder Mother Moon's efforts to convene global leaders from all walks of life to address the root causes of world problems. Referring to the example of Eleanor Roosevelt, the first chair of the UN Commission on Human Rights, who was instrumental in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, she said that IAFLP can become a platform to realize a world of lasting peace based on interdependence, mutual prosperity, and universal values.

H.E. Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Finland's first female prime minister, offered her unique perspective on the theme, both as speaker and session moderator. She highlighted the importance of women in using their unique value to claim a place in peace negotiations. From experience, she offered three key elements generally applicable in peace negotiations. First: Study the nation's history and specific traits that may justify certain decisions and help understanding. Second: Be aware of the cooperation between authorities and NGOs, and include all sides. Third: Use personal examples of democratic societies to help people connect to their stories, struggles and victories.

H.E. Nayla Moawad, former minister of social affairs and former first lady of Lebanon, who became active in politics following the assassination of her husband, President René Moawad in 1989, said, "If we want to improve the world situation, we need to encourage women to be active in politics." She referred to the increasing number of women engaged in Lebanese politics over the last 40 years. "Good political leaders need to connect to the people with heart, understand their needs, and encourage them to achieve their goals," she said. Mrs. Moawad highlighted the importance of cooperation between authorities and NGOs in fulfilling essential tasks to serve the people.

Dr. Elena Drapeko, a member of the Russian State Duma and first deputy chair of the Committee on Culture, elaborated on the causes of conflict and bloodshed. After observing that poor knowledge of the history of one's nation and other nations can be the root of misunderstanding and mistrust, resulting in conflicts and violence, Dr. Drapeko initiated reconciliation projects through cultural exchange programs in villages, enabling people to become acquainted and to build trust. Further examples include the successful involvement of mothers in areas of conflict (the border with Ukraine) to achieve a ceasefire, and repatriation of orphaned children from Syria.

Ms. Boram Kim, who works for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Germany, offered both Korean and UN perspectives. Ms. Kim highlighted the role of women in UN peacekeeping missions in the last two decades. She offered data from global UN peacekeeping missions indicating an increase in women's participation from 1 percent to 11 percent in police units since 1993. Ms. Kim highlighted the impact on global affairs of the UN declarations on the role of women. She concluded by asking, "How can we position women to be considered sustainable change-makers in peace-making and reconciliation processes?"

International Association of Arts and Culture for Peace – IAACP webinar

April 30, 2021 – 16:00 CET

Theme: "The Role of Culture in the Peaceful Reunification of the Korean Peninsula"



As moderator, **Mr. Armando Lozano**, president of the Espacio Ronda Cultural Centre in Madrid, spoke about approaching the division on the Korean Peninsula through the medium of art. "People remember accomplishments made in art, architecture, or music, with gratitude for their diversity, without any sense of competition," he noted. Culture is a universal language that goes beyond the tensions and problems created by history and by politics, he said.

Before each panelist's presentation, a short video of the panelist's background and artistic work was shown.

Dr. Antonio Domenech, an associate professor in East Asian studies and Korean studies at the University of Malaga, Spain, lived for 10 years in South Korea, where he married a Korean artist. Most important, he said, is to understand *han*, the feeling of suffering and pain experienced by older Korean people who suffered the most from the separation of their families between North and South. *Han* has united many in an attempt to overcome the division of a nation with one culture, history, and language. In 2000, he witnessed the reunion meetings of Korean families, giving them hope for reunification of North and South Korea. Moreover, the common cultural heritage of both countries is an important tool on the way to unification.

Ms. Isabella Krapf, a musician and vice president of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Association in Austria, worked as a teacher of music in a Pyongyang theater from 2011 to 2013 and testified that North Koreans are proud of their culture, art and music. Traditional dance has a prominent place in North Korean culture, and indeed in the lives of people all over the country. Painting, calligraphy, embroidery, and singing all help to keep the old culture alive. On the other hand, interest in contemporary styles and influences from abroad, such as jazz, is also strong.

Dr. Oleksiy Rohotchenko, an art critic and member of the National Academy of Arts of Ukraine, described the rich arts culture of Korea, including its ancient art of pottery. He gave examples of the unifying role that subcultures play among people. The annual Festival of Blacksmiths in Ukraine gathers blacksmiths from around the world who share their skills in re-created real-life conditions. The former East and West Germans, the divided Koreans, Ukraine, all share folk art of their own. Ethnoculture can be a country's guide to a worldwide cultural sphere.

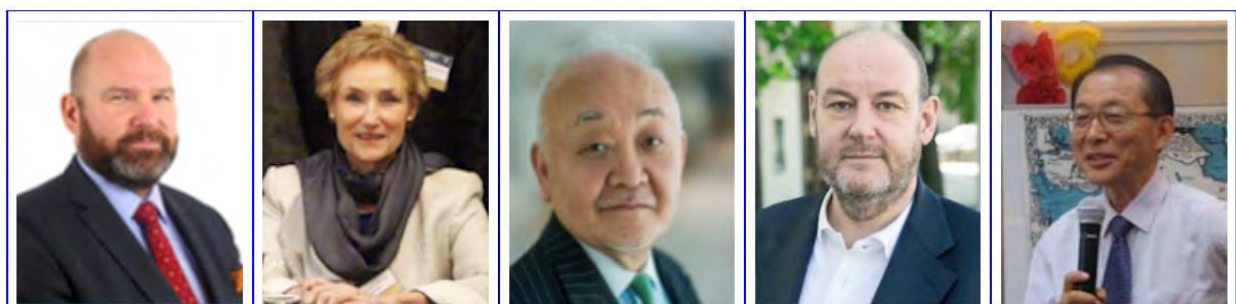
Ms. Ji Suk (Jessy) Baek, a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Seoul who resides in Croatia, expressed that since Korea was divided despite the will of Koreans, reunification cannot depend only on the two Koreas. Since the 1980s, the Korean Wave, i.e., the popularity of South Korean K-pop and other cultural products, has spread around the world, even into North Korea. She likes to believe that a united Korean culture can contribute to the development of a world culture that can nurture and elevate the spirit.

In their concluding remarks, the speakers emphasized the importance of bringing together young people from the South, who have little interest in reunification, and youngsters from the North, through cultural, educational programs or sports, and school-to-school exchange programs. Women are particularly well placed to bring people closer together, and folk art, which does not require much theoretical explanation, unlike contemporary art, can be a good tool for cultural dialogue.

International Association of Academicians for Peace - IAAP WEBINAR

May 1, 2021 – 9:30 CET

Theme: "Toward a Northeast Asian Economic Community? What Can Be Learned from the History of the European Union"



The moderator, **Dr. Niklas Swanström**, the executive director of the Institute for Security and Development Policy in Sweden, brought his expertise to the conference and gave initial remarks: "I do think there are some important lessons that can be learned from the European experience, but Northeast Asia is a unique region. Nothing happens in a regional bubble; international factors always play a major role, so cooperation is necessary."

The first speaker, **Hon. Erna Hennicot-Schoepges**, former president of the Chamber of Deputies of Luxembourg, reviewed the step-by-step process of European unification, from the European Coal and Steel Community after World War II to the European Economic Community, and finally today's European Union.

The founding principle of the EU is democracy, and that is the priority to work on. "The world is changing after this pandemic. It has become more global. We need to understand that it's all about compromise and links between people, and about political will," she concluded.

Mr. Jun Isomura, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute of Washington DC, based in Japan, noted that under the 1953 Armistice Agreement, the Korean Peninsula is still at war. "An end-of-war agreement between the DPRK and the US, including the UN Command, would not mean an end-of-war between the DPRK and the ROK, theoretically. So, before talking about unification, South Korea should solve this problem. Just as West Germany had undertaken a wide variety of preparations toward East Germany and Eastern Europe, the unification of the DPRK and ROK needs a similar process of preparation," he explained.

Dr. Vladimir Petrovsky, chief researcher at the Russia-China Center of the Institute of Far Eastern Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences, said that to create an economic community in Northeast Asia, we should look to the experience of integrated formations in East Asia and Eurasia. European integration came on the foundation of reconciliation after World War II, he said. However, in Northeast Asia there are still territorial disputes on many borders and a lack of mutual trust between nations. This is what prevents building a community. He concluded by saying that it is not advisable to build connections against China, or to exclude it.

In their final remarks, speakers said: The first step toward unification would be to let citizens meet and families reunite. In Germany, the people were the ones who opened the borders, not the politicians. North Korea has no intention of starting a war with the United States. Missiles are a tool for negotiating. They want to be recognized as a nation.

In his concluding remarks, **Mr. Yoshihiro Yamazaki**, liaison director for Europe and the Middle East of the Institute for Peace Policies from Japan, said that if the Korea question finds a solution, it surely will help many nations and peoples in distress around the world to untangle their own situation. Accordingly, UPF has been elaborating three guiding principles toward peaceful and prosperous communities of nations: interdependence, mutual prosperity, and universally shared values, which the UPF founders have been explicitly advocating since the 1960s.

CLOSING SESSION

May 1, 2021 – 11:00 CET



The International Leadership Conference ILC2021 closed with reflections from **Dr. Katsumi Otsuka**, the regional co-chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, and **Dr. Michael Balcomb**, the regional chair of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) in Europe and the Middle East. Each thanked the speakers and participants for their involvement in this intense program, and for the great diversity of viewpoints and proposals that were offered in support of peace and reunification on the Korean Peninsula.

Mr. Jacques Marion, regional co-chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, gave a brief overview of each webinar discussion, followed by **Ms. Carolyn Handschin-Moser**, the coordinator of the International Association of First Ladies for Peace, who reported about the speakers and discussions in the IAFLP webinar.

Seventy years ago, the world fought in Korea but left the country divided. Today it is UPF's conviction that the world needs to come together again and take responsibility to resolve the division of the Korean Peninsula, which is a key focus of the power struggle between major nations of the world.



Japan-Korea Tunnel Promoted at IAED Webinar

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Japan-Korea Tunnel Promoted at IAED Webinar

Written by Ole Toresen, national representative, IAED-Norway

📅 26 April 2021



The panelists with UPF leaders Jacques Marion and Robin Marsh at the beginning of the webinar



London, United Kingdom—A proposed Japan-Korea tunnel may join the ranks of the world's most famous tunnels.

"Toward an Undersea Tunnel Connecting Japan and Korea: Lessons from the Eurotunnel and the Marmaray Tunnel" was the title of an online conference held by the Europe and Middle East branch of UPF and its International Association for Peace and Economic Development (IAED).

Approximately 300 participants attended the webinar, which was held on April 26, 2021, as one of the sessions of the International Leadership Conference being held simultaneously in different regions of the world from April 26 to May 1.



Mr. Robin Marsh, Secretary General, UPF United Kingdom

The moderator, **Robin Marsh**, secretary general of UPF-United Kingdom, said that a tunnel between Korea and Japan would profoundly affect East Asian peace and prosperity.

SESSION 0 (IAED)

- [Session 0 \(IAED\)](#)
- [Session 1 \(Opening\)](#)
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[Mr. Masayoshi Kajikuri, Chairman, International Highway Construction Foundation; Chairman, UPF Japan](#)

Masayoshi Kajikuri, the chair of the International Highway Construction Foundation and the chair of UPF-Japan, offered introductory remarks. He explained that in 1981, at the 10th International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences convened in Seoul, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, the founder of UPF, proposed the International Peace Highway Project. In his vision, the Japan-Korea Undersea Tunnel would be the terminal of this international highway.

At a summit of Japan and South Korea in 2010, the two governments agreed on a Joint Project toward a New Era of Japan and Korea, and the promotion of the Japan-Korea Undersea Tunnel was included among the 21 agendas of the summit. The next step, Mr. Kajikuri said, is to establish a bilateral agreement between Japan and South Korea on the tunnel project with support from many members of parliament. Support from citizens and authorities of both countries is needed, he said.

A short video was shown to illustrate the project. When in 2013 the Marmaray Tunnel opened, connecting Asia and Europe at Istanbul, Turkey, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said, "Now let's all dream of a bullet train that departs from Tokyo to Istanbul, and from Istanbul to London!"

[Click here for the full intervention of Mr. Masayoshi Kajikuri](#)



[Dr. Yoshimitsu Nishikawa, Professor, Faculty of Regional Development Studies, Toyo University, Japan](#)

Dr. Yoshimitsu Nishikawa, a research fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences, Toyo University, Japan, explained that the Japan-Korea tunnel, which will be over 230 kilometers (over 140 miles) in length, will connect the Japanese island of Kyushu with the South Korean city of Busan.

Professor Nishikawa argued that an undersea tunnel will have a great effect on the economic development of the two countries. At present, Japanese companies provide parts to Korea, and Korean companies assemble them and export finished products to the world.

Transportation of tourists also will become easier, he said. The number of Japanese and Korean tourists who travel between the two countries exceeds 10 million a year.

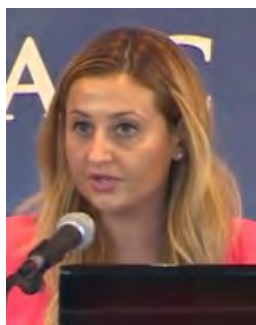
If a transmission line passes through the tunnel, a mutual exchange of energy between Japan and Korea will become possible.

Building this tunnel also will have a political effect, as it will bring the two countries closer together. The spirit of cooperation could contribute to peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

At a time when anti-globalism is on the rise, it is necessary to take measures to enhance cross-border interaction, such as the Japan-Korea Undersea Tunnel, Professor Nishikawa said.

The cost of constructing this world's longest undersea tunnel is estimated to be around \$100 billion and the construction period about 10 years. Based on high-level technology, construction of a Japan-Korea Undersea Tunnel is technically feasible.

[Click here for the full intervention of Dr. Yoshimitsu Nishikawa](#)



[Hon. Ms. Gözde Dizdar, Vice President, Centrist Asia Pacific Democrats International](#)

Gözde Dizdar, the vice president of Centrist Asia Pacific Democrats International, then explained about the Marmaray Tunnel. It is the deepest immersed tube tunnel in the world with a depth of 60 meters, connecting the European and Asian sides of Istanbul. A big challenge for construction was the seismic design of the immersed tunnels with an earthquake resistance of 7.5 Richter. Other challenges were working in an area with high ship traffic (50,000 ships a year), archeological findings and political pressures.

The contract was given to a consortium of Japanese and Turkish contractors. Project risk management at every level is very important in such projects, Ms. Dizdar said. These immersed tube tunnels are 1.4 km long as they cross the Bosphorus Strait, but they are connected to tunnels on both sides, 12 km bored tunnels in total. In addition, a 63 km commuter rail system was upgraded, a new third rail track for an inter-city railway system was added, and train stations were upgraded.

The tunnel construction started in 2004, but finishing the project was delayed for four years (2009 to 2013) due to discovering an archeological site in the sea. In March 2019 the overground part of the Marmaray project was completed and normal train traffic started to run through the tunnel.

Ms. Dizdar said the project provides a long-term sustainable solution to Istanbul's transportation problems. It decreases travel time for more than one million people every day. It reduces congestion on the existing Bosphorus Strait bridges, and it reduces the traffic in the historic peninsula and thereby decreases pollution and carbon dioxide release.

[Click here for the PowerPoint presentation of Ms. Gözde Dizdar](#)



Professor Roger Vickerman, MA, DPhil, Dr h.c., FAcSS, FRSA, FCILT, FeRSA, Emeritus Professor of European Economics, University of Kent, United Kingdom

Professor Roger Vickerman, emeritus professor of European Economics, University of Kent, United Kingdom, explained that the construction of the present Channel Tunnel began in 1987 and the tunnel opened in 1994. It is a 50km tunnel system comprising two running tunnels and a linked service tunnel. This provides two types of service: shuttle trains for cars and trucks between terminals, and through rail services. For passengers, Eurostar high-speed trains link London to Paris and Brussels. Limited through freight services are also provided.

The tunnel was a purely privately financed project, Professor Vickerman said. But there were public commitments to both road and rail improvements linking the tunnel into national transport networks. A consortium of construction companies and banks was responsible for the construction and has a 99-year concession to run the tunnel.

Tunnels are expensive to build, and especially the cost of undersea tunnels is unpredictable, Professor Vickerman said. The Channel Tunnel had to be refinanced several times, as the total cost escalated from the 1985 estimate of around £6 billion to double that amount when it opened. Probably considering both private and public funding would be more appropriate, he said.

Competition in the cross-Channel market became stronger than anticipated, both from ferry companies and from the growth of low-cost airlines, Professor Vickerman said. Rail freight was not as foreseen, but truck traffic increased considerably. Effective writing off of the initial construction debt became necessary.

Professor Vickerman asked, "Was building the Channel Tunnel a mistake?" His answer was that initial investors lost; equity holders had equity diluted. However, despite not being able to meet the original forecasts, Eurotunnel has managed to increase its revenues and become a commercially viable business.

[Click here for the PowerPoint presentation of Professor Roger Vickerman](#)

Questions and answers:

Professor Vickerman, asked to give advice to the Japanese colleagues, said it is important to have clear support from a range of stakeholders, both nationally and locally, to build consensus. Also environmental concerns are important.

Answering a question about funding, Professor Vickerman said such a project involves much risk. Therefore, there should be both equity and loan financing.

Professor Nishikawa was asked when the building of the Japan-Korea tunnel can start. He said there is a question how the cost should be shared. It will take at least 10 years to get consensus on this project, he said.



M. Jacques Marion, Co-Chair, UPF Europe & Middle East, France

In his closing remarks, **Jacques Marion**, the co-chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, said that the Japan-Korea tunnel is meant to be the first link of a Great International Highway that would run through China to the west and Russia to the north, helping to create a prosperous East Asian Economic Zone. It would then reach out to Western Europe on one hand, and to the United States and Canada on the other hand, by means of an undersea tunnel at the Bering Strait.

Two specific challenges in this grand project underscore the name "Highway for Peace," Mr. Marion said. One is a tunnel between Japan and Korea; the second the tunnel connecting Russia and the United States at the Bering Strait. In both cases, the project implies overcoming decades of hostility inherited from 20th century conflicts between these nations.

Another key obstacle, he said, is the current division of the Korean Peninsula.

Mr. Marion thanked the participants for the valuable information they provided.

[Click here for the full intervention of M. Jacques Marion](#)

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 INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PEACE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**Toward an Undersea Tunnel connecting Japan and Korea:
 Lessons from the Eurotunnel and the Marmaray Tunnel**

Mr. Robin Mar...

April 26th, 2021, 09:00 - 10:30 CET

00:08

zoom



Presentation of the Japan-Korea Tunnel Project.



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Europe-Middle East ILC Opens with Focus on Korea

Written by Robin Marsh, secretary general, UPF-United Kingdom

📅 29 April 2021



Jacques Marion, regional co-chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East



Paris, France—UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon’s speech during the International Leadership Conference’s Opening Session set the direction for the ILC’s eight sessions.

UPF of Europe and the Middle East began its regional ILC2021 on April 29, 2021, with an opening plenary titled “Toward a Peaceful Reunification on the Korean Peninsula: Creating the Foundation for a Unified World.”

Each of the eight online ILC sessions, held between April 26 and May 1, represented a different UPF association and focused on a different aspect of Korean reunification.

The Opening Session also drew attention to Think Tank 2022, a new initiative which will call upon experts from around the world to contribute to the reunification of North and South Korea.

The keynote speakers for the Opening Session were Italian Sen. Pier Ferdinando Casini and Swiss entrepreneur Dr. Claude Béglé.

Dr. Thomas G. Walsh, the chair of UPF International, and UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon sent recorded messages.

The invocations from **Rev. Canon Ann Easter** of the United Kingdom, the former chaplain to HRH Queen Elizabeth II, and **Sheikh Mohamad Ali Al-Haj Al-Amili** of Lebanon, the imam of the As-Sajjad Seminary, reflected the UPF approach that peace-making efforts must be rooted in godly values. ([Click here for the prayer of Sheikh Mohamad Ali Al-Haj Al-Amili](#))



Dr. Thomas Walsh,
Chairman, UPF
International, President,
World Peace Road
Foundation, USA



Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, Co-
Founder, Universal Peace
Federation



Cllr. Reverend Canon Ann
Easter, Commissioner for
Interfaith and Inter-
religious Dialogue, London
Borough of Newham,
United Kingdom



Sheikh Mohamad Ali Al-Haj
Al-Amili, Imam, As-Sajjad
Seminary, Lebanon



Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, Chair,
UPF Europe & Middle East

Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, the regional co-chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, highlighted the motivation underlying the current International Leadership Conference webinars, which were being convened simultaneously on five continents. He explained that they were being held to commemorate the December 1991 visit to North Korea of UPF co-founders Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon, in which they sought to open a channel for dialogue between the North and South.

These webinars are also meant to lay a foundation for Think Tank 2022, as multiple expert working groups examine various issues pertaining to Korean reunification, for example, the role of Europe in promoting reconciliation.

[Click here for the intervention of Dr. Katsumi Otsuka](#)



Hon. Pier Ferdinando
Casini, Senator; Former
President, National
Assembly; Honorary
Chairman,
Interparliamentary Union,
Italy

In his keynote speech, Italian **Sen. Pier Ferdinando Casini**, the former president of the National Assembly and the honorary chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, explained that the issue of Korean reunification is an example of the tension between political pragmatism and utopianism. While politics is rooted in "realism and concreteness," it feeds on utopian dreams like the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula.

He identified this tension in the hope of the historic summit in April 2018 of South and North Korean leaders at Panmunjom in the Demilitarized Zone but also in the pragmatism that extinguished those hopes.

Senator Cassini affirmed that "if reunification in a political sense appears today as a dream, a convergence of interests that makes the policies of the two countries head as much as possible toward the same direction does not seem to be impossible."

He said that the UPF support for peaceful Korean reunification could strengthen "a spirit of collaboration between the two Koreas, in the awareness that it will be the most profitable political investment in view of resolving regional crises and building world peace."

[Click here for the intervention of Hon. Pier Ferdinando Casini](#)



Dr. Claude Béglé, Swiss
entrepreneur, founder and
president of the investment
company Symbioswiss

Dr. Claude Béglé, an entrepreneur and former Swiss MP who has visited North Korea, expressed that the problem is not just between Seoul and Pyongyang. These nations fall between the tension of the two geopolitical camps led by China and the United States which he said are striving for hegemony. The Korean Peninsula is a buffer between these two camps. Dr. Béglé said that both South Korea and North Korea have pride in their achievements. The North Koreans have pride in overcoming severe sanctions to develop their own consumer market as well as nuclear weapons. He has experienced similarities between the peoples of the two nations because "Koreans are Koreans," he said. They are both hard-working and strive for excellence.

"People have to accept that the situation is not black or white, to acknowledge that they also made mistakes, as it happens in the process of transitional justice," Dr. Béglé said. "They have to learn to forgive each other, as Germany and France managed to do over time, allowing so for the European construction. Europe, by the way, could share with the Koreans that experience of a real reconciliation after two successive horrible wars."

[Click here for the intervention of Dr. Claude Béglé](#)

The Opening Session also highlighted a UPF initiative of its co-founder, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, the highly successful Rally of Hope, by showing a compilation video of the five programs so far. Featuring speakers such as former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon; former South African President F.W. de Klerk and World Food Programme CEO David Beasley, both Nobel laureates; Professor Sarah Gilbert, the co-inventor of Oxford University's COVID-19 vaccine; and former European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, the video heralded the sixth Rally of Hope, which was scheduled for May 9.



M. Jacques Marion, co-chair, UPF Europe & Middle East, France

Jacques Marion, regional co-chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, and the moderator of the Opening Session, reminded the audience that “the Sixth Rally of Hope will conclude our ILC2021 conference with the launch of a global working group of experts called Think Thank 2022, which will focus on the issue of peace and reconciliation on the Korean Peninsula.”



Dr. Thomas Walsh, Chairman, UPF International, President, World Peace Road Foundation, USA

Continuing that theme, **Dr. Thomas Walsh**, UPF International chairman, in his recorded message emphasized that there is a strong strategic plan to focus on moving the Korean Peninsula toward peace. To that end there have been 120 UPF webinars over the last three months leading up to these International Leadership Conferences. This network of experts across the world will link to the eight associations within UPF, and their peace efforts will be undertaken in a multi-sectoral manner. Fact-finding missions also will be held, once the pandemic allows, with high-level delegations visiting key stakeholder nations.

Dr. Walsh explained that the next UPF World Summit was planned for November 2021 in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the UPF co-founders' visit to North Korea in December 1991. If that is not possible, he said, then the World Summit will be held in the spring of 2022, gathering all the expert working groups from around the world in Seoul.

[Click here for the intervention of Dr. Thomas Walsh](#)



Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, Co-Founder, Universal Peace Federation

Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, co-founder of UPF, spoke of the Korean War and the miracle of 16 UN member nations coming forward to support South Korea in that war. Tearfully referring to those soldiers, many of whom were still in their teens, as heroes of the providence, Dr. Moon said she was determined that they will not be forgotten. Many of those veterans, now in their 90s, have stated that they want to see a peacefully united Korea. Dr. Moon expressed her desire to see that each of those contributing nations has a monument on which the fallen soldiers' names are inscribed.

With that emotion fresh in the audience's mind, the session concluded with an outline of the ILC schedule of webinars, following the structure of the eight UPF associations promoting the dream of Korean unification through practical and realistic means.

[Click here for the intervention of Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon](#)

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OPENING PLENARY
Toward a Peaceful Reunification on the Korean Peninsula:
Creating the Foundation for a Unified World

April 29th, 2021, 09:30 - 11:00 CET

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Europe's Role in Korean Reunification Discussed

Written by Mr. Koriel Ben Zvi, Vice President, UPF Israel

📅 29 April 2021



The moderator and panelists of the webinar



Vienna, Austria—Two former prime ministers joined the International Summit Council for Peace session of the Europe and the Middle East ILC2021.

The online meeting of ISCP, a UPF association, was the third session of the International Leadership Conference organized by UPF of Europe and the Middle East.

The ISCP session on April 29, 2021, was titled "The Implications for Europe of the Process toward Peaceful Reunification on the Korean Peninsula— How Can Europe Assist in That Process?"

Europeans remain largely unaware of the geostrategic importance of the Korean Peninsula and the impact that Korean reunification could have on global peace and security as well as economic growth. This webinar aimed to elevate the consciousness of peaceful reunification on the peninsula, examining how valuable Europe's role could be in facilitating this, and what Europe might gain from such an outcome. About 270 viewers took part in the online conference.

The four keynote speakers were:

H.E. Yves Leterme, the prime minister of Belgium (March 2008 to December 2008, and November 2009 to December 2011). He later served as deputy secretary general of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik, the prime minister of Norway (1997 to 2000, and 2001 to 2005); and minister of foreign affairs (1989 to 1990). He is also an ordained Lutheran minister. In 2006, he founded the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, which operates closely with the Kim Dae-jung Library in Seoul.

Dr. Karin Kneissl, foreign minister of Austria (2017 to 2019), and a diplomat, journalist, political analyst, and author.

Dr. Alexander Zhebin, the director of the Center for Korean Studies at the Institute of Far Eastern Studies of the

Russian Academy of Sciences and widely regarded as Russia's foremost expert on Korean affairs. Dr. Zhebin worked for 12 years in North Korea as a journalist and as a diplomat and is the author of numerous publications on Korean affairs.



Mr. Mark Brann, Vice President UPF Europe and Middle East and Director of ISCP Europe and Middle East

Mark Brann, vice chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East and director of ISCP for Europe and the Middle East, gave the opening remarks. He briefly introduced UPF's founders, Father and Mother Moon, and repeated Mother Moon's prediction that the process of Korean reunification would start as early as 2022. To help this process, in 2020 Mother Moon initiated a global interdisciplinary working group of experts to explore and advise on how this could be achieved.



Dr. Werner Fasslabend, President of the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, Minister of Defence (1990-2000), Austria

The moderator was **Dr. Werner Fasslabend**, the Austrian minister of defense (1987 to 1990, and 1990 to 2000) and current president of the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy. He extended a warm greeting to the participants and emphasized that the Korean Peninsula is situated at the epicenter of world politics and draws the interest of the three great world powers. He then introduced the session's four distinguished panelists.



H.E. Yves Leterme, Prime Minister of Belgium (2009 - 2011), Belgium

H.E. Yves Leterme, the former prime minister of Belgium, began by clarifying European views on the topic. He provided four incentives for the European Union and the global community to be more involved in Korean reunification.

First: Pacification is the best way to prevent an outbreak of a second Korean War. Second: the rising tensions and the continuous failure on the part of the international community to prevent North Korea from becoming a fully fledged nuclear power. Third: A pacified Korean Peninsula would bring about a balance of power in a crucial region. Fourth: concern for the well-being of the population of the Korean Peninsula, especially in the North.

Prime Minister Leterme pointed out that by a more active engagement, the European Union and its member states should focus on three key elements: denuclearization and non-proliferation, social and economic development, and human rights. Until today, he said, the European Union has been sitting on the sidelines and not taking an active role.



H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik, Prime Minister of Norway (1997-2000 & 2001-2005), Norway

H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik, the former prime minister of Norway, offered some thoughts about the tragedy of Korea being divided into two independent states, despite being one people. He expressed his desire for the people in the North to have more freedom, to have their human rights protected, and to enjoy prosperity.

From his experience and observation, imposing our will on North Korea has not been successful to this day. Instead, he said, we should adopt a warmer and more positive approach, such as the "sunshine policy" that was initiated by Kim Dae-jung, the president of South Korea from 1998 to 2003. Such an approach, based on communication and dialogue, can warm relations rather than freezing them.

In addition, the prime minister proposed that Europe take an approach based on the model of the Helsinki Accords. Through this process, Europe during the Cold War arranged meetings of the conflicting forces in an agreed location, creating a dialogue and making agreements regarding economic cooperation, security cooperation, and human rights. Similarly, he said, North Korea would be able to arrive at some agreements which eventually would lead to a developed economy. From a long-term perspective, it could guide North Korea back into the greater international community.



Dr. Karin Kneissl, Austrian diplomat, political analyst and author. Minister of Foreign Affairs (2017-2019), Austria

Dr. Karin Kneissl, the former foreign minister of Austria, stressed the importance of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which took place in Vienna in 2015 between Iran and the five permanent U.N. Security Council members (China, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, the United States) plus Germany and the European Union. The plan was designed to prevent nuclear proliferation by Iran and was widely referred to as the "Iran Nuclear Deal."

North Korea was quietly observing the situation with the international community with regard to Iran. Once the United States withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018, Dr. Kneissl said, the reaction in North Korea was most likely that the US cannot be trusted.

Dr. Kneissl said that now there is a chance for a fresh start with the Biden administration. The United States could reconnect with the JCPOA in two possible ways – enter the agreement with the same conditions that existed when they left it or renegotiate the terms of the agreement. In the latter case, they would focus not only on the nuclear restrictions but also the regional role of Iran in the Middle East. Dr. Kneissl's advice was that the development in the JCPOA should be used as a base that would help gauge the North Korean response.

When looking at Europe as a larger player, it has nations such as Switzerland, Norway, and Russia, countries with dense, far-reaching diplomatic networks, Dr. Kneissl said. They could play a role using their channels with North Korea and share information on those developments, as long as the roles are clear regarding who is doing what. Because Asian countries often feel they must choose between China and the United States, the European Union or other European countries can serve as an alternative.



Dr. Alexander Zhebin, Director, Center for Korean Studies, Institute of Far Eastern Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia

Dr. Alexander Zhebin, a noted Korea expert from Russia, noted that the peaceful reunification of Korea is possible only through a long period of peaceful coexistence. During this period, economic cooperation and security guarantees can play a role in building trust between the North and South.

Due to historical and psychological circumstances, it would be easier for North Korea to deal with and communicate with mid-level powers from Europe. Therefore, Russia disagrees with those who are advocating postponement of the implementation of economic projects with North Korea until the nuclear issue is resolved. Such projects are important for opening new opportunities for business cooperation and economic integration, Dr. Zhebin said, and would serve to strengthen confidence and security in the region. Now it is very important to move from political statements to practical steps that will build trust.

Dr. Zhebin said that a multinational effort produced a paper published in 2019 by the International Institute of Madrid, defining the role of Europe in facilitating both the solution to the nuclear problem and the reunification of the Korean Peninsula. The paper proposed that the EU should re-establish its high-level political dialogue with North Korea as soon as possible and convince the US and both Koreas that dialogue is necessary to achieve both solutions. The EU also should share its vast experience in confidence-building measures, soften the sanctions imposed on North Korea in the process of its denuclearization, and provide humanitarian, financial, and technical assistance.

[Click here for the full intervention of Dr. Alexander Zhebin](#)

After the presentations, the moderator presented two questions to be answered by the speakers. The first was "How can we overcome and bridge the rivalries created between the two Koreas' different systems?" The second was

“What can be done to draw Korea away from the tensions between the big world powers?”

To the first question, Prime Minister Yves Leterme replied based on his experience of hosting a delegation of women from Pyongyang as a confidence-building measure. Every opportunity for people-to-people interaction should be given high importance, he said. As for the second question, he said that once the political situation allows it, common economic projects can help with the integration of Europe and the EU.

Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik replied that it is true that there is a systemic rivalry between the Koreans, but there is also a strong will among the people to reunify. He gave the example of West and East Germany, which were able to unite and form one country once again. The process is possible, but not a quick fix, he said; it will require time.

Dr. Karin Kneissl said that the systemic rivalries could be very hard to overcome. Around the 1990s there was some momentum in that direction; however, today it is a much more multipolar world. She too encouraged the idea of allowing as many human encounters as possible, and especially while older Koreans are still alive.

Dr. Alexander Zhebin suggested that both Koreas should be reminded to abide by the many agreements that already have been established between them. Regarding the tension on the Korean Peninsula to choose between the US and China, a situation which causes great stress, the role of Europe could be to send a message to the big powers, saying that they should not push Korea to choose, and allow it to be freer.



Mr. David Fraser Harris,
Secretary General, UPF
Middle East

David Fraser Harris, the secretary general of UPF for the Middle East, led a question-and-answer session with questions collected from the participants during the webinar.

The first question was “Could we think of a team of mutual facilitators—some from Western countries, such as the EU, Norway and Switzerland, and some from Asia, for example Mongolia and Vietnam?”

To this question Dr. Zhebin replied that initial progress in the Korean settlement can be done only by a bilateral track between the US and North Korea. That is because North Korea is very much threatened by military power. Only after such progress will middle powers from Europe and Asia have a chance to contribute and find opportunities for economic cooperation and humanitarian exchanges.

Next, Mr. Fraser Harris brought up the idea, suggested by Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik, about having an Asian Helsinki Process. He asked if the other speakers had any comment on this idea.

Dr. Kneissl answered that in the 1990s there was an effort to stretch the Helsinki Process to the Middle East as a larger diplomatic concept. Later it was even considered for use in Africa. However, when one closely checks the Helsinki Process, with all its success and achievements, it is not a concept that can be used in all conflict areas, she said. The Helsinki Process was a very particular case of confrontation between two military blocs on one continent. As much as she felt deep appreciation and admiration for the process that took place in 1975, she was doubtful if an Asian Helsinki Process could be the answer. She said: “We should never push analogies too far. I think the Korean Peninsula merits its own handling.”

Dr. Zhebin added that the two cases are also different in the sense that in Northeast Asia there are territorial disputes, no mutually recognized borders and no mutually recognized governments. In Europe, the Helsinki Process was possible because everybody recognized each other.

After a few more questions and interactions, Mr. Fraser Harris ended the Q&A and gave the floor back to the moderator, Dr. Fasslabend, for closing remarks.

Mr. Brann of UPF and ISCP thanked the panelists and stated that from UPF’s perspective, the importance of a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula cannot be overestimated. For this reason, UPF and its affiliated organizations have put tremendous efforts into this cause during the past 40 years.

Mr. Brann emphasized the many different changes and developments that are occurring in Northeast Asia and said that it is of great importance that Europe fully recognizes the implications of these changes and shifts, and moves to embrace them and work with them. This means doing everything in Europe’s power to help bring peace to this region. Europe has a lot to give Asia, through helping the reunification of the Korean Peninsula, but also much to gain, Mr. Brann said. Therefore, it must be prepared to accept the challenges that this could entail.



The implications for Europe of the Process toward Peaceful Reunification on the Korean Peninsula - How can Europe assist in that Process?



April 29th, 2021, 11:30 - 13:00 CET

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Europe's Role in Korean Reunification Discussed

Written by Mr. Koriel Ben Zvi, Vice President, UPF Israel

📅 29 April 2021



Dr. Werner Fasslabend, former Austrian minister of defense



SESSION 2 (ISCP)

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Vienna, Austria—Two former prime ministers joined the International Summit Council for Peace session of the Europe and the Middle East ILC2021.

The online meeting of ISCP, a UPF association, was the third session of the International Leadership Conference organized by UPF of Europe and the Middle East.

The ISCP session on April 29, 2021, was titled "The Implications for Europe of the Process toward Peaceful Reunification on the Korean Peninsula— How Can Europe Assist in That Process?"

Europeans remain largely unaware of the geostrategic importance of the Korean Peninsula and the impact that Korean reunification could have on global peace and security as well as economic growth. This webinar aimed to elevate the consciousness of peaceful reunification on the peninsula, examining how valuable Europe's role could be in facilitating this, and what Europe might gain from such an outcome. About 270 viewers took part in the online conference.

The four keynote speakers were:

H.E. Yves Leterme, the prime minister of Belgium (March 2008 to December 2008, and November 2009 to December 2011). He later served as deputy secretary general of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik, the prime minister of Norway (1997 to 2000, and 2001 to 2005); and minister of foreign affairs (1989 to 1990). He is also an ordained Lutheran minister. In 2006, he founded the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, which operates closely with the Kim Dae-jung Library in Seoul.

Dr. Karin Kneissl, foreign minister of Austria (2017 to 2019), and a diplomat, journalist, political analyst, and author.

Dr. Alexander Zhebin, the director of the Center for Korean Studies at the Institute of Far Eastern Studies of the

Russian Academy of Sciences and widely regarded as Russia's foremost expert on Korean affairs. Dr. Zhebin worked for 12 years in North Korea as a journalist and as a diplomat and is the author of numerous publications on Korean affairs.



Mr. Mark Brann, Vice President UPF Europe and Middle East and Director of ISCP Europe and Middle East

Mark Brann, vice chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East and director of ISCP for Europe and the Middle East, gave the opening remarks. He briefly introduced UPF's founders, Father and Mother Moon, and repeated Mother Moon's prediction that the process of Korean reunification would start as early as 2022. To help this process, in 2020 Mother Moon initiated a global interdisciplinary working group of experts to explore and advise on how this could be achieved.



Dr. Werner Fasslabend, President of the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, Minister of Defence (1990-2000), Austria

The moderator was **Dr. Werner Fasslabend**, the Austrian minister of defense (1987 to 1990, and 1990 to 2000) and current president of the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy. He extended a warm greeting to the participants and emphasized that the Korean Peninsula is situated at the epicenter of world politics and draws the interest of the three great world powers. He then introduced the session's four distinguished panelists.



H.E. Yves Leterme, Prime Minister of Belgium (2009 - 2011), Belgium

H.E. Yves Leterme, the former prime minister of Belgium, began by clarifying European views on the topic. He provided four incentives for the European Union and the global community to be more involved in Korean reunification.

First: Pacification is the best way to prevent an outbreak of a second Korean War. Second: the rising tensions and the continuous failure on the part of the international community to prevent North Korea from becoming a fully fledged nuclear power. Third: A pacified Korean Peninsula would bring about a balance of power in a crucial region. Fourth: concern for the well-being of the population of the Korean Peninsula, especially in the North.

Prime Minister Leterme pointed out that by a more active engagement, the European Union and its member states should focus on three key elements: denuclearization and non-proliferation, social and economic development, and human rights. Until today, he said, the European Union has been sitting on the sidelines and not taking an active role.



H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik, Prime Minister of Norway (1997-2000 & 2001-2005), Norway

H.E. Kjell Magne Bondevik, the former prime minister of Norway, offered some thoughts about the tragedy of Korea being divided into two independent states, despite being one people. He expressed his desire for the people in the North to have more freedom, to have their human rights protected, and to enjoy prosperity.

From his experience and observation, imposing our will on North Korea has not been successful to this day. Instead, he said, we should adopt a warmer and more positive approach, such as the "sunshine policy" that was initiated by Kim Dae-jung, the president of South Korea from 1998 to 2003. Such an approach, based on communication and dialogue, can warm relations rather than freezing them.

In addition, the prime minister proposed that Europe take an approach based on the model of the Helsinki Accords. Through this process, Europe during the Cold War arranged meetings of the conflicting forces in an agreed location, creating a dialogue and making agreements regarding economic cooperation, security cooperation, and human rights. Similarly, he said, North Korea would be able to arrive at some agreements which eventually would lead to a developed economy. From a long-term perspective, it could guide North Korea back into the greater international community.



Dr. Karin Kneissl, Austrian diplomat, political analyst and author. Minister of Foreign Affairs (2017-2019), Austria

Dr. Karin Kneissl, the former foreign minister of Austria, stressed the importance of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which took place in Vienna in 2015 between Iran and the five permanent U.N. Security Council members (China, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, the United States) plus Germany and the European Union. The plan was designed to prevent nuclear proliferation by Iran and was widely referred to as the "Iran Nuclear Deal."

North Korea was quietly observing the situation with the international community with regard to Iran. Once the United States withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018, Dr. Kneissl said, the reaction in North Korea was most likely that the US cannot be trusted.

Dr. Kneissl said that now there is a chance for a fresh start with the Biden administration. The United States could reconnect with the JCPOA in two possible ways – enter the agreement with the same conditions that existed when they left it or renegotiate the terms of the agreement. In the latter case, they would focus not only on the nuclear restrictions but also the regional role of Iran in the Middle East. Dr. Kneissl's advice was that the development in the JCPOA should be used as a base that would help gauge the North Korean response.

When looking at Europe as a larger player, it has nations such as Switzerland, Norway, and Russia, countries with dense, far-reaching diplomatic networks, Dr. Kneissl said. They could play a role using their channels with North Korea and share information on those developments, as long as the roles are clear regarding who is doing what. Because Asian countries often feel they must choose between China and the United States, the European Union or other European countries can serve as an alternative.



Dr. Alexander Zhebin, Director, Center for Korean Studies, Institute of Far Eastern Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia

Dr. Alexander Zhebin, a noted Korea expert from Russia, noted that the peaceful reunification of Korea is possible only through a long period of peaceful coexistence. During this period, economic cooperation and security guarantees can play a role in building trust between the North and South.

Due to historical and psychological circumstances, it would be easier for North Korea to deal with and communicate with mid-level powers from Europe. Therefore, Russia disagrees with those who are advocating postponement of the implementation of economic projects with North Korea until the nuclear issue is resolved. Such projects are important for opening new opportunities for business cooperation and economic integration, Dr. Zhebin said, and would serve to strengthen confidence and security in the region. Now it is very important to move from political statements to practical steps that will build trust.

Dr. Zhebin said that a multinational effort produced a paper published in 2019 by the International Institute of Madrid, defining the role of Europe in facilitating both the solution to the nuclear problem and the reunification of the Korean Peninsula. The paper proposed that the EU should re-establish its high-level political dialogue with North Korea as soon as possible and convince the US and both Koreas that dialogue is necessary to achieve both solutions. The EU also should share its vast experience in confidence-building measures, soften the sanctions imposed on North Korea in the process of its denuclearization, and provide humanitarian, financial, and technical assistance.

[Click here for the full intervention of Dr. Alexander Zhebin](#)

After the presentations, the moderator presented two questions to be answered by the speakers. The first was "How can we overcome and bridge the rivalries created between the two Korea's different systems?" The second was

“What can be done to draw Korea away from the tensions between the big world powers?”

To the first question, Prime Minister Yves Leterme replied based on his experience of hosting a delegation of women from Pyongyang as a confidence-building measure. Every opportunity for people-to-people interaction should be given high importance, he said. As for the second question, he said that once the political situation allows it, common economic projects can help with the integration of Europe and the EU.

Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik replied that it is true that there is a systemic rivalry between the Koreans, but there is also a strong will among the people to reunify. He gave the example of West and East Germany, which were able to unite and form one country once again. The process is possible, but not a quick fix, he said; it will require time.

Dr. Karin Kneissl said that the systemic rivalries could be very hard to overcome. Around the 1990s there was some momentum in that direction; however, today it is a much more multipolar world. She too encouraged the idea of allowing as many human encounters as possible, and especially while older Koreans are still alive.

Dr. Alexander Zhebin suggested that both Koreas should be reminded to abide by the many agreements that already have been established between them. Regarding the tension on the Korean Peninsula to choose between the US and China, a situation which causes great stress, the role of Europe could be to send a message to the big powers, saying that they should not push Korea to choose, and allow it to be freer.



Mr. David Fraser Harris,
Secretary General, UPF
Middle East

David Fraser Harris, the secretary general of UPF for the Middle East, led a question-and-answer session with questions collected from the participants during the webinar.

The first question was “Could we think of a team of mutual facilitators—some from Western countries, such as the EU, Norway and Switzerland, and some from Asia, for example Mongolia and Vietnam?”

To this question Dr. Zhebin replied that initial progress in the Korean settlement can be done only by a bilateral track between the US and North Korea. That is because North Korea is very much threatened by military power. Only after such progress will middle powers from Europe and Asia have a chance to contribute and find opportunities for economic cooperation and humanitarian exchanges.

Next, Mr. Fraser Harris brought up the idea, suggested by Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik, about having an Asian Helsinki Process. He asked if the other speakers had any comment on this idea.

Dr. Kneissl answered that in the 1990s there was an effort to stretch the Helsinki Process to the Middle East as a larger diplomatic concept. Later it was even considered for use in Africa. However, when one closely checks the Helsinki Process, with all its success and achievements, it is not a concept that can be used in all conflict areas, she said. The Helsinki Process was a very particular case of confrontation between two military blocs on one continent. As much as she felt deep appreciation and admiration for the process that took place in 1975, she was doubtful if an Asian Helsinki Process could be the answer. She said: “We should never push analogies too far. I think the Korean Peninsula merits its own handling.”

Dr. Zhebin added that the two cases are also different in the sense that in Northeast Asia there are territorial disputes, no mutually recognized borders and no mutually recognized governments. In Europe, the Helsinki Process was possible because everybody recognized each other.

After a few more questions and interactions, Mr. Fraser Harris ended the Q&A and gave the floor back to the moderator, Dr. Fasslabend, for closing remarks.

Mr. Brann of UPF and ISCP thanked the panelists and stated that from UPF’s perspective, the importance of a peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula cannot be overestimated. For this reason, UPF and its affiliated organizations have put tremendous efforts into this cause during the past 40 years.

Mr. Brann emphasized the many different changes and developments that are occurring in Northeast Asia and said that it is of great importance that Europe fully recognizes the implications of these changes and shifts, and moves to embrace them and work with them. This means doing everything in Europe’s power to help bring peace to this region. Europe has a lot to give Asia, through helping the reunification of the Korean Peninsula, but also much to gain, Mr. Brann said. Therefore, it must be prepared to accept the challenges that this could entail.



The implications for Europe of the Process toward Peaceful Reunification on the Korean Peninsula - How can Europe assist in that Process?



April 29th, 2021, 11:30 - 13:00 CET

0:09

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SESSION 4 (IAPP)

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ILC2021 EUME: International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace

Written by Dong Soon Chen, UPF Europe and the Middle East

📅 29 April 2021



Maria Nazarova, the president of UPF-Russia, is the moderator.



Europe and the Middle East—An online conference of parliamentarians addressed the issue of Korean reunification.

The International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP), one of the UPF associations, held a webinar on April 29, 2021, as one of the sessions of the International Leadership Conference organized by the Europe and Middle East branch of UPF.

Members of Parliament from Russia, Italy and the United Kingdom spoke on the topic "The Role of Parliamentarians in Contributing to Peace on the Korean Peninsula."

A total of 223 attendees participated in the online conference.

Speakers

Dr. Michael Balcomb, the regional chair for Europe and the Middle East of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), an organization that is affiliated with UPF

Hon. Gadzhimurad Omarov, a deputy of the State Duma, Russian Federation

Sen. Roberto Rampi, a member of the Italian Senate and a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Hon. Keith Best, a former member of Parliament of the United Kingdom and the chair of UPF-UK

Baroness Sandip Verma, a member of the House of Lords of the United Kingdom

Abstract

Seventy years ago, following World War II, the Korean people, who share a common history, culture, and language, were divided by the world superpowers' Cold War struggle. Considering its potential impact on global peace and

development, the peaceful reunification of the Korean Peninsula is a central focus of the IAPP, along with peace among all the nations of Northeast Asia.



Mrs. Maria Nazarova,
President, Universal Peace
Federation Russia

Moderator **Maria Nazarova**, the president of UPF-Russia, warmly introduced the distinguished panelists. She opened the floor for the panelists to discuss three important questions:

Can Europe contribute to peace on the Korean Peninsula?

What role can be played by Russia, which connects Europe and Northeast Asia?

Can parliamentary diplomacy move forward the long-awaited peace process in this conflicted region?



Mr. Peter Haider, President,
Universal Peace Federation
(UPF), Austria

Reiterating these questions, **Peter Haider**, the president of UPF-Austria, in his welcoming remarks concisely outlined the origins of IAPP. He also explained why UPF strives to bring parliamentarians together to work on issues such as Korean reunification. It has been the lifelong dream of UPF founders Father and Mother Moon to see Korea united again. For 50 years Korea was occupied by Japan, and for 70 years since the war it has been a divided nation. Mr. Haider said he envisions the firm support of the international community for Korean reunification.



Dr. Michael Balcomb,
Regional President, FFWPU
Europe and the Middle
East, United Kingdom

Dr. Michael Balcomb, the regional chair of FFWPU, drew the participants' attention to the historical details of the Korean War, i.e., who contributed to the division of Korea. He stressed that this conflict was never just about Korea but rather was the result of a clash of global forces. The reunification of the Korean Peninsula therefore is very much everyone's business, he said.

Dr. Balcomb said he has observed that the Korean people believe the conflict in question is only for the Korean people to resolve and that any potential contribution from the outside would be unwelcome.

Offering a contrasting perspective, Dr. Balcomb with many strong examples demonstrated cases in which help from the "outside" has greatly improved and sustained the peace and security of people and their nations. If we can work together, more major unsolved conflicts can be brought to an end, he said.

[Click here for the intervention of Dr. Michael Balcomb in ILC 2021](#)



Hon. Gadzhimurad
Omarov, Deputy of the
State Duma, Russian
Federation

Hon. Gadzhimurad Omarov, a member of the Russian Parliament, said we are in an age when no nation can develop on its own any longer. Therefore, his vision involves nations putting aside their own agendas in order to focus on the bigger picture, helping each other to ensure the peace, safety and security of all.

Mr. Omarov, having recently come back from a trip across Africa, and challenged by his observations, spoke of the need for change in Sierra Leone—a country where the civil war ended in 2002. He was struck by the lives and destiny of the people following the civil war in the country, which reminded him of the situation on the Korean Peninsula—an ongoing conflict.

Mr. Omarov said he understands that Korea's division was decided by foreign nations and that they should not hesitate to contribute to the solution of this conflict.

Russia has been in diplomatic relations with South Korea for over 30 years, he said, and is still applying all efforts to assist peaceful reunification. Mr. Omarov expressed his passionate support for the unity of Korea.



Hon. Roberto Rampi,
Senator, Italy

Admiring the good works of UPF, **Sen. Roberto Rampi** from Italy, though unable to attend in person, responded to the call of this webinar with a recorded presentation.

“The Korean people have been divided for too long,” he said.

Using his vast experience of being politically involved locally, nationally and internationally, he asserted that interdisciplinary work is essential to facilitate the progress toward a reunified, peaceful Korean Peninsula. Mr. Rampi suggested using cultural tools such as art and sports as a peaceful means to break down barriers.

Mr. Rampi, whose home is located on the same 38th parallel as the Korean Peninsula, said he feels compelled by such a connection to do something. He encouraged people to contribute to and organize initiatives of exchange with the two Koreas.

[Click here for the intervention of Hon. Roberto Rampi in ILC 2021](#)



Hon. Keith Best, former
member of the British
Parliament, UPF UK Chair of
the Board of Trustees

Hon. Keith Best, a former member of the UK Parliament, said he envisions a Korea unified by improved diplomacy, as dialogue is critical. Furthermore, he outlined the current responsibility of the European Union to ease tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

He said he strongly believes that parliamentarians, especially those of Europe and the Middle East, can play a huge role in the dialogue. Mr. Best showed us how his many experiences have led to the ideas he has today.

He emphasized the opportunity for more and better dialogue by parliamentarians. As they do not represent their government, they have more freedom to examine areas of interest, with fewer diplomatic consequences. Their greater capacity to ascertain real issues of contention and red lines can be fed into the greater discussion, and sometimes can be more informative than what even the most sophisticated intelligence service can provide.

[Click here for the intervention of Hon. Keith Best in ILC 2021](#)



Baroness Sandip Verma,
Member of the House of
Lords, Chair of UN Women
UK, United Kingdom

“How can we do the right thing if we cannot even have an open and honest debate?” **Baroness Sandip Verma**, a member of the United Kingdom’s House of Lords, wondered. She explained her vision of a world in which interaction and engagement come at all levels, despite the political differences we may have.

Baroness Verma explained how interaction and collaboration of thought, solutions, practices, and delivering outcomes in a positive and friendly way have brought the best success in all governments in the past.

The challenge of COVID-19 and the current global crisis require an unfamiliar global response, which means having shared interests worldwide, she said. Miscommunication and lack of shared interest between countries have made apparent the rifts throughout the world today that block us from the goal of unity.

In order to avoid the same mistakes leading to more discord, Baroness Verma emphasized the need for improved management of relationships across all borders.

Question-and-answer session

Mr. Omarov said that nations should put aside their own agendas and work toward one common goal, which is global peace and justice. He said he hopes that Koreans can take the initiative in uniting their country and wishes for further dialogue with Korean parliamentarians to ask how Russia can best support them.

Mr. Best said he believes firmly that the European Union, for various reasons, does have a central role to play as a catalyst for interaction and unity on the Korean Peninsula.

Baroness Verma emphasized that trust from the EU alone is not enough. Trust needs to be established on all sides in order to go forward.

Dr. Balcomb said that Korea, though small, is now powerful enough to erase doubts of becoming a bargaining chip for greater national powers. It’s apparent that there is support for North-South Korean unity from the European Union. Listening to the voices of Korea is the next step to reaching the goal of unity on the Korean Peninsula.





The Role of Parliamentarians in contributing to Peace on the Korean Peninsula



April 29th, 2021, 16:30 - 18:00 CET

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