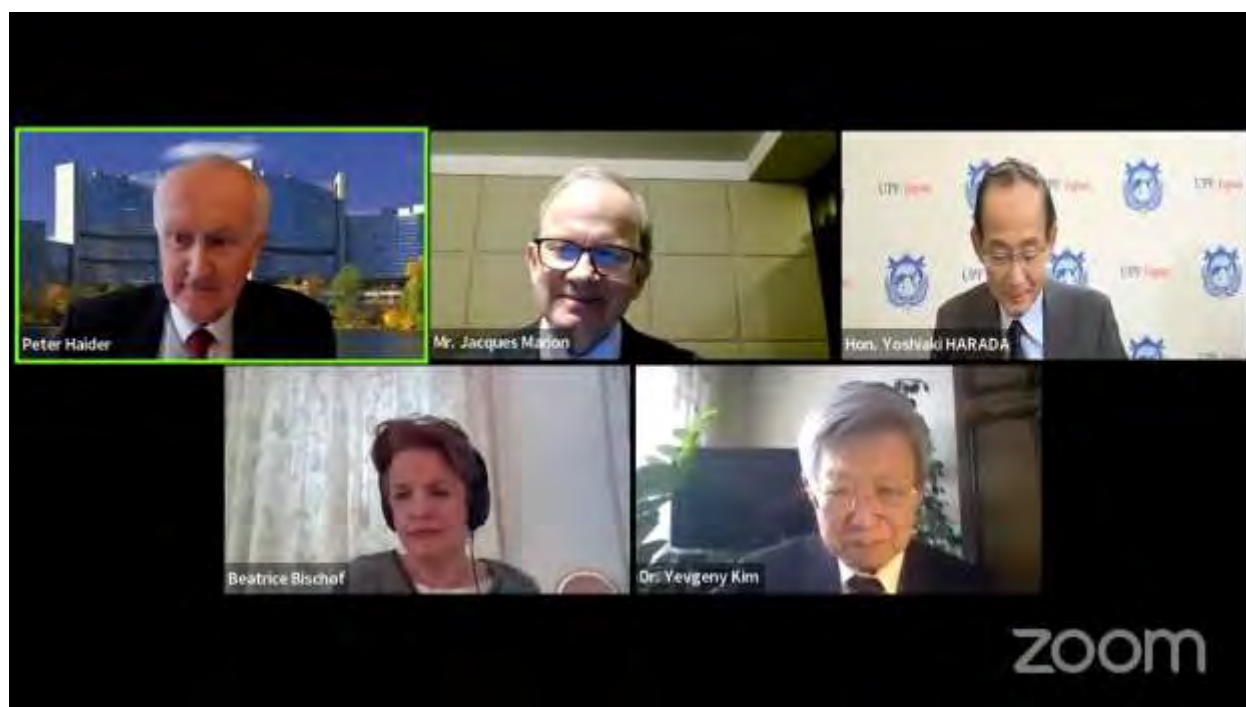


Think Tank 2022 Forum Europe and Middle East, February 1: Opening Session and IAPP Session

Robin Marsh
February 1, 2022



Europe and the Middle East - The first webinar of the Think Tank 2022 Global Forum presented parliamentarians' views on Korean reunification.

A brief Opening Session on the morning of February 1, 2022, led into the session titled "Peace and Stability in East Asia and the Korean Peninsula," which was organized jointly by the Europe-Middle East (EUME) and Japanese branches of UPF's International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP).



[Mr. Jacques Marion, Co-chair, UPF Europe and Middle East, France](#) The moderator of the Opening Session, UPF-EUME Co-Chair Jacques Marion, welcomed the online audience to the first of eight webinars being held from February 1 to 3. He explained that the Think Tank 2022 Global Forum webinars were a precursor to the events of World Summit 2022, which would be held in Seoul, South Korea, and online from February 11 to 13.

The Think Tank 2022 webinars were being held not only in Europe and the Middle East but also in Asia, Africa, and the Americas by UPF and its associations, he said. Several of the online sessions were being held jointly with UPF associations from other continents.



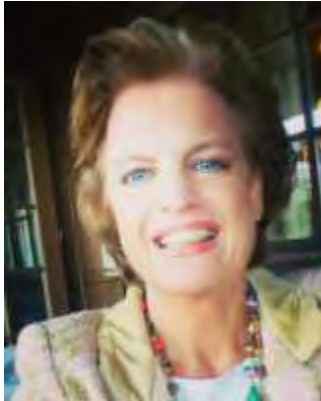
[Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, Chair, UPF Europe and Middle East](#) Mr. Marion then introduced Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, the co-chair of UPF for Europe and the Middle East, who gave an introduction to Universal Peace Federation and the Think Tank 2022 Forums. Dr. Otsuka highlighted the UPF approach, which emphasizes cooperation, dialogue, empathy, and living for the sake of others.

[Click here for the full opening Remarks by Dr Katsumi Otsuka](#)



[Peter Haider, IAPP coordinator for Europe and the Middle East, and president of UPF-Austria](#) As the IAPP session started, Peter Haider, the IAPP coordinator for Europe and the Middle East, and the president of UPF-Austria, explained that IAPP was established in 2016 in Seoul by UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon to bring together parliamentarians in the search for peaceful solutions to the world's problems. It was launched in Europe in the United Kingdom's Houses of Parliament in September 2016.

Then IAPP-Japan President Yasushi Matsumoto explained that the association was now officially registered in the Japanese Diet and included 78 current parliamentarians. It had engaged in two-plus-two forums with US congressmen last year and wanted to do the same with EUME politicians.



[Dr. Beatrice Bischof, Foreign Affairs Association, Munich, Germany](#) The session moderator was Dr. Beatrice Bischof, a member of the managing board of the Foreign Affairs Association in Munich, Germany, who has specialized in Asian foreign policy issues, including the Korean Peninsula. Her questions to the main speakers revealed a keen understanding of the issues.



[Hon. Yoshiaki Harada, Former Minister of Environment; Former Member of the House of Representatives, Japan; President of the IAPP Japan Forum](#)

Hon. Yoshiaki Harada, a former Japanese parliamentarian and government minister who is now the president of the IAPP-Japan Forum, highlighted the key points for Japanese foreign policy, such as the tension with China over the Senkaku Islands and its threat to Taiwan; the current Ukraine-Russia tension; and the limitations placed upon military spending since World War II by the Japanese constitution.

The status of the Korean Peninsula is a very important issue for Japan, Hon. Harada said. Japan is watching and hoping for North and South Korea to get together, but Japan does not have an effective role in this issue. Japan has tensions with the Republic of Korea (South Korea) over the ownership of the Takeshima Islands and the past issue of "comfort women," for example. The North Korean missile tests are a concern for Japan, which would like the DPRK to be much more established within the international community of nations.

Hon. Harada explained that just as the United States returned Okinawa to Japan about 50 years ago, he would like to see Russia return the Kuril Islands to Japan. Another speaker, Dr. Yevgeny Kim of Russia, responded to this by saying that Japan acknowledged the Russian ownership of these islands upon its accession to the United Nations in 1957.

Hon. Harada added that the Japanese government wants to make very clear that China should stop the human rights violations of the Uyghurs. He said he hoped that Chinese human rights issues could be ended during the Winter Olympics.



[Hon. Glyn Ford, Former UK Member of the European Parliament; Founder, Track 2 Asia, UK](#)

Hon. Glyn Ford from the United Kingdom, a former member of the European Parliament, explained that he has visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) almost 50 times. Many of those visits were part of a European Union parliamentary delegation. He has had a dialogue with the DPRK International Department for approximately 10 years. Based on these experiences, he has authored two books on North Korea, of which the latest, *Talking with North Korea: Ending the Nuclear Standoff*, articulates his desire to bring a negotiated solution.

DPRK President Kim Jong Un believes he faces two existential threats, Hon. Ford explained. Externally he feels threatened by the United States, South Korea and Japan. The DPRK spends 25 percent of its budget on the military; however, South Korea outspends North Korea on defense spending by a factor of six. The DPRK spends 50 times less than South Korea, Japan and the United States.

Hon. Ford explained the DPRK's perspective by outlining its perceived internal threat. The people who matter in Pyongyang must be able to maintain their standards of living. There is an inherent contradiction, he said, because the development of nuclear weapons brings both the protection that cannot be guaranteed by conventional forces and also the consequent UN sanctions that make economic development very difficult. The DPRK says that, without those sanctions, it could grow its economy like other Asian tigers.

The path to peace is very long and will have to go step by step, maybe over a decade or more, Hon. Ford said. U.S. President Donald Trump was trying to conclude a peace treaty in a short time without going through those steps, he said.

Hon. Ford expressed the view that the DPRK would require a multilateral agreement like the Iranian treaty, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States) or maybe including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) but also would be looking for \$15 billion to \$20 billion to denuclearize. This would need a wider international donor program, because the United States could not pass this through Congress.

There are new hopes for a Six Party Talk format, he said, maybe with other bodies such as ASEAN or South Asian states. China was very keen for the Six Party Talks to develop, but the widely held DPRK view was that Tokyo was sabotaging them during the administration of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Under the new Japanese prime minister, Fumio Kishida, there could be new hope. Mr. Kishida was probably the last senior Japanese politician to meet senior DPRK officials. The sticking point, Hon. Ford believes, is getting the United States and the DPRK at the same table, as they have a low level of mutual trust at the moment.



[Dr. Yevgeny Kim \(Kim Young Woong\), Leading researcher at the Center for Korean Studies, Institute of the Far East, Russian Academy of Sciences \(IFES\), Russia](#) Dr. Yevgeny Kim (Kim Young Woong), a leading researcher at the Center for Korean Studies, Institute of the Far East, Russian Academy of Sciences, agreed with Hon. Glyn Ford that the imbalance of military spending between the DPRK and South Korea, Japan and the United States has led to the current situation. He explained that the threat of an attack by the DPRK was very unlikely, given that it would lead to its destruction.

Dr. Kim contrasted the lack of Chinese or Russian military bases in the DPRK and the presence of US military bases in South Korea. American nuclear weapons are sometimes in South Korea, he said. China will not want to invade Taiwan, he said, because the economic cost would be so great. He said he has found the North Korean people to be resilient despite sanctions and even COVID-19.

Dr. Kim suggested that the ending of US and South Korean military exercises would be a good confidence-building measure.

Both Dr. Kim and Hon. Ford considered that until recently the DPRK had unilaterally imposed a moratorium on its intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) tests for four years. They believed the DPRK had been looking for the United States to make a concession in response, either on sanctions relief or military exercises with South Korea.

[Click here for the full intervention of Dr. Yevgeny Kim](#)



[Hon. Nina Nováková, Member of the Parliament of the Czech Republic](#) Hon. Nina Nováková, a member of parliament of the Czech Republic, spoke of her passion for peace and the prevention of the crime of war. She considered the plight of the divided Korean Peninsula in relation to the experience of the people of Germany and other peoples of Central Europe. She perceived a similar result when powerful nations draw lines on maps to suit themselves without consulting with the people concerned.

Hon. Nováková perceived a tension between the strong identity that the Korean people's 5,000-year history brings and the dwindling desire of South Koreans to reunite with North Korea, now that the separation has lasted more than 70 years. She emphasized that a parental mindset is needed to draw together a divided people. She noted the power of intermarriage to overcome divisions between her own country and Slovakia, which until the end of 1992 were one nation.

[Click here for the full intervention of Hon. Nina Nováková](#)



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Intervention of Dr. Katsumi Otsuka at the Think Tank 2022 Forum

Written by Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, Chair, UPF for Europe and the Middle East

📅 01 February 2022



Intervention of Dr. Katsumi Otsuka, Chair, UPF for Europe and the Middle East at the Opening Session of the Think Tank 2022 Forum on 1 February, 2022.

Respected Panelists, Ambassadors for Peace and dear UPF friends!

I am very happy to greet you representing the UPF Europe and the Middle East. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your participation in this program: Think Tank 2022 Global Forum.

Last year 2021, as you know well, we organized various webinars on the topic of the peaceful re-unification of the Korean Peninsula commemorating the 30th anniversary of the UPF founder's meeting with the president of North Korea, Kim Il-sung.

It was our greatest happiness that we could invite many well-known political leaders, religious leaders, scholars, leaders from business and media fields to our program. As a result of these webinars, THINK TANK 2022 was created for the purpose of realizing peace on the Korean Peninsula and throughout the world. The program you are joining now is the start of a series of programs in the name of Think Tank 2022.

As you know, the origin of the UPF can be sought back in the last century. Humanity experienced all kinds of tragic wars in the 20th century. The Korean War, which broke out in 1950, is described by scholars as the 3rd World War, which resulted the division of a family, a tribe, the nation of Korea and the world. It is not, therefore, too much to say that the division of Korea was not the simple division of a nation, but rather it was the manifestation of the entire division of humanity.

Dr. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, were both born in what is now North Korea. They experienced Japan's 36-year rule, the 2nd World War and the Korean War. The division of Korea has prevented both of them from seeing their relatives in North Korea. When he was in his 20's, Dr. Moon was arrested by the North Korean Government and sentenced to five years of hard labor in an extermination camp. According to Dr. Moon, he witnessed many people dying of hunger, sickness, and execution. In the case of Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, at the age of 6 she escaped from North to South Korea and experienced the life of a refugee there. These experiences surely motivated them to work for world peace and for the peaceful reunification of their nation by dialogue with mutual respect.

Dr. & Mrs. Moon took a crucial step 30 years ago towards the establishment of peace on the Korean Peninsula. They visited Pyongyang, North Korea, in December 1991, and had a peace talk with President Kim Il-sung who once attempted to kill Dr. Moon. It was amazing to me that they embraced President Kim, going beyond their terrible past experiences. The agreement they signed became North Korea's fundamental foreign policy framework towards South Korea in the 1990's. Dr. & Mrs. Moon played a crucial role in citizen diplomacy between North and South Korea. Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon has a strong hope to visit North Korea again. I fervently hope that her visit to North Korea will be realized someday soon in 2022.

I am very happy to share with you about the upcoming exciting event this February. UPF International is going to host the Summit Conference 2022 in the city of Seoul, Korea, from February 10-13. Surprisingly, this Summit Conference is co-sponsored by the Cambodian Government. The Invitation letter signed by both Prime Minister H.E.



Hun Sen and the former Secretary General of the United Nations, H. E. Ban Ki Moon, was sent out to 157 nations around the world. I am very excited about this event.

Dear UPF friends!

In today's world, many of the problems are intricately intertwined and cannot be solved by one country alone. Dr. & Mrs. Moon, therefore, have presented the new ideology of Head-Wing Thought. According to the Founders' idea, the keywords of UPF will be "Empathy, Cooperation, Dialogue with the heart of living for the sake of others, True Love"

We are very fortunate to be able to keep climbing on with you towards the summit of world peace with the spirit of living for the sake of others.

I have more to share with you, but let me close my greetings here expressing my deep thanks again to you for participating in the Think Tank 2022 Global Forum webinars hosted by UPF Europe and the Middle East. May you have a fruitful discussion in this program.

Thank you very much.

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Intervention of Dr. Yevgeny Kim at the Think Tank 2022 Forum

Written by Dr. Yevgeny Kim (Kim Young Woong), Leading researcher at the Center for Korean Studies, Institute of the Far East, Russian Academy of Sciences (IFES), Russia



📅 01 February 2022

Intervention of Dr. Yevgeny Kim (Kim Young Woong), Leading researcher at the Center for Korean Studies, Institute of the Far East, Russian Academy of Sciences (IFES), Russia, at the Opening Session of the Think Tank 2022 Forum on 1 February, 2022.

The situation around the Korean Peninsula now is generally not particularly alarming, although it may change during this year, and perhaps soon.

The situation is not particularly alarming because the United States, the European Union, NATO have become prisoners of their own inflated and hyped story about some intentions of Russia to invade Ukraine. Therefore, they are now not so interested in Korea and the situation around the Korean Peninsula.

North Korea has made infrequent tests of short-range surface-to-surface missiles and cruise missiles there, and the launches of hypersonic missiles with short range, so that they do not threaten the United States, and it makes no sense for North

Korea to demonstrate its military capabilities against other states. Although it must be said that by launching a hypersonic missile from a mobile platform, North Korea has shown the fairly successful development of various methods for launching such missiles, which, however, are at the initial stage of production.

On the other hand, it is impossible not to pay attention to the fact that both Japan and South Korea have been rapidly increasing spending on military purposes in recent years. So, for example, the annual increase in South Korea's military spending in recent years is 7.5%, and according to the defense plan for 2021-2022, the annual military spending of the Republic of Korea will be more than the spending of the second military power in the world - Russia. Also, Japan spends more than Russia on military purposes, though, according to its constitution, it should not fight with anyone.

In addition, in October of last year, South Korea launched a rocket with a model or layout satellite that weighed half a ton. At the same time, the first stage of the South Korean missile had a thrust force of 300 tons, which makes it possible for it to launch intercontinental ballistic missiles that are powerful in terms of the dimensions and striking capabilities of warheads.

As you know, in May 2021, the United States officially lifted all restrictions on the range and weight of a payload launched with a rocket from South Korea. The actual presence of an intercontinental ballistic missile in Japan has long been confirmed by the withdrawal of satellites from the Japanese cosmodrome.

Until the United States throws a tantrum on North Korea, as it does with Russia's alleged attack on Ukraine or China's equally mythical intention to attack Taiwan, North Korea will quietly improve its defense systems, but the focus will be on economic objectives.

The recent Plenum of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, as well as the meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, and the meetings and conferences held by agricultural workers, showed that it is more important for the DPRK this year to reinforce the achievements of the past year. For example, the construction of 10,000 apartments in Pyongyang annually in beautiful high-rise comfortable buildings, as well as the completion of the construction of the exemplary county town of Samjien, the construction of housing



for workers at the Komdok mining enterprise.

Three days ago, the North Korean leader was at the construction site of a large greenhouse complex for a cooperative in the province of South Hamgyong, by the way, where the father of current South Korean President Moon Jae-in was born and raised. And he entrusted its building to army builders. So, the North Korean army is not only engaged in defense, but also actively involved in the economic development of the country, which confirms the point of view that it is not preparing to attack. And now the most important problem in the country is to seriously increase the harvest of rice and wheat, respectively, by reducing the share of corn in the diet of the population. This is a very serious task.

Much of the situation on the Korean peninsula will depend on the actions of the United States, as well as who will win the presidential election in South Korea. As you know, for the period 2019-2021, that is, for 3 years, the United States conducted about 250 joint military exercises in South Korea. Why so many in foreign territory?

I want to remind you that in 2018, then-President D. Trump spoke about the uselessness of military exercises in South Korea and promised the North Korean leader in Singapore to significantly reduce them, and to completely cancel the exercises that irritate the northerners. In addition, during the same time, the United States imposed 20 different sanctions against the DPRK. Although North Korea has not conducted nuclear tests and has not conducted test launches of intercontinental missiles for 4 years, the United States vetoed two times the proposals submitted by Russia and China to the UN Security Council to ease sanctions against the DPRK, at least on humanitarian aspects.

5 years ago, when President Moon Jae-in took up office, he set as his task to achieve by May 2022 the decision to transfer the operational command of the South Korean troops into the hands of the South Korean army itself in wartime. President Trump gave at least lip service to President Moon's plans positively, and substantive negotiations began to sign such an agreement and implement it.

For the sake of this, South Korea signed an agreement on the purchase of expensive American heavy fighters of the F-35 generation, for more than \$100 million each, and agreed that a joint command of the American and South Korean forces would be created, headed by a South Korean 4-star general who is not in military service.

However, a perfectly reasonable question arose, what would he do if his deputy was an American four- or three-star general in military service and who, of course, would not take into account the opinion of a person who would not have any levers of military influence. As a military retiree, he is a retiree.

In addition, if a candidate wins the presidential election on March 9 in South Korea, who declares the possibility of launching a preventive strike against the DPRK, as well as importing American nuclear weapons into the territory of their country or additionally deploying the THAAD anti-missile system in South Korea, then the situation will be very disturbing. Russia's analysts do not expect any military conflict between China and Taiwan initiated by China until at least 2035.

China, which determines policy with a long-term vision, building its policy not for 4 or 5 years, but for a long period of time, there is no need to use force against Taiwan, because, the natural development of economic and cultural ties between China and Taiwan will gradually lead to the unification of China with Taiwan. Another issue is that I am skeptical about the prospect of unification of Korea, as long as there are politicians who claim the presidency from the country's two largest parties, make such irresponsible statements regarding pre-emptive strikes.

Russia's position on the situation around the Korean Peninsula remains the same: we proceed from the need to ensure equal security for all countries in the region, to renounce attempts to impose only its own model of life on all countries in the region, to renounce attempts to circumvent international law, replacing them with some invented rules themselves.

We are confident that only through political and diplomatic means can peace be achieved, and this means negotiations, step-by-step decisions and compromises based on the principle of equal and indivisible security and respect for the right of each state to live by its own laws, respecting and observing international law. There is no need to demonize anyone; we should respect and observe the right of every people to live according to their traditions and culture, in good neighborliness and cooperation, without placing illegal barriers on them. Then there will be lasting peace in the region and in the world.

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Intervention of Hon. Nina Nováková at the Think Tank 2022 Forum

Written by Hon. Nina Nováková, member of parliament of the Czech Republic

01 February 2022



Intervention of Hon. Nina Nováková, member of parliament of the Czech Republic, at the Opening Session of the Think Tank 2022 Forum on 1 February, 2022.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

I am very honoured to participate in your conference. At the same time, I am well aware, like all of you, that it is taking place at a time when the attacks of evil, whose only aim is to divide humanity by all possible means, are getting stronger and stronger.

I am from the Czech Republic, very far – 8 249 kilometres – from Korea, but our countries are close to each other in our shared experience of having had our borders redrawn as a result of war.

As a child I heard from my family how they used to feel at home not only in Czechia, but also in the large central European monarchy, where people of eleven different nationalities and believers of different faiths, including Judaism

and Islam, lived together in peace and harmony. This ended with the collapse of the monarchy at the end of the first world war when the geopolitical map was redrawn and new, small, independent states came into being. Within twenty years, within just one generation, however, many of them, including my own country, Czechoslovakia, succumbed to the Nazi totalitarian regime.

At the end of the second world war, the Allied powers decided to redraw central Europe yet again. The main line was a division between the Soviet block and Western Europe. Only three years later, our country, a highly educated, industrially developed pluralist democracy, ended up on the side where civil liberties quickly disappeared and a one-party system, the rule of the Communist Party, was embedded into the Constitution.

The fate of our nearest western neighbour, the so-called East Germany, was even worse. The iron curtain divided not only the nation, but also families, for forty long years.

Let me share an interesting fact with you, to illustrate how European countries are strongly aware of their national identities. When the Communist block collapsed and my country, the Czechoslovak Federal Republic, regained its freedom, the nation ethnically closest to us, the Slovak nation, decided to go its own, separate way. That is what they decided to do, but despite our separation we have remained the closest central-European partners, our languages are very similar and thousands of families both in Czechia and Slovakia are truly Czecho-Slovak.

Now let's return to the situation in former East Germany. The state regime kept many families strictly divided, but, thanks to God, the continuity of human connections managed to bridge those forty years of Communist rule. Even though, this year, Germany will have been reunified for thirty-two years, some studies still show evidence of a remaining divide between the Western and the Eastern Germans.

Korea, with its long history spanning millennia, has not been divided by a line into eastern and western parts. That line on the 38th parallel north was not drawn by the Korean nation, it was not drawn by the forefathers of today's young Koreans in the North and in the South. The people of Korea did not deliberately split their heart and their mind.

Both on the 14th meridian here in my country and on the 126th meridian in Korea the fate of millions of families was

in the hands of the superpowers. But there is a difference in that the division of Germany did not spark another war.

Let me share two personal memories with you. I heard from my father how distressed my parents were by the events of the Korean war, especially my mother, who worried that the apocalypse of a world war could be repeated.

That time had such a profound impact on my mother that much later, in 2016, at the age of 95, her eyes filled with tears when she saw pictures of Czech cars I had brought from my visit to the demilitarised zone on the 38th parallel. The passengers of those cars, citizens of our country, were helping the diplomatic talks about a truce. "We were serving a good cause," my mother said. I didn't have the heart to point out to her the obvious fact that this was not peace; that the war, a crime in the eyes of the UN and a major sin in the eyes of God, did NOT end.

The Korean nation has been divided for almost seventy years, so the hope for people who used to know each other to be reunited is slowly fading.

This, however, does not diminish but rather adds urgency to the appeal to people of goodwill and peacemakers to strive even harder to finally bring about the reunification of Korea.

At first it was a geopolitical decision of superpowers. Now, there are certainly economic interests at play as well.

Dividing people, setting them up against each other... no mother, no father would do that. I ask all people in authority to approach their negotiations and proposals with a parental mindset. War is a crime, war is a sin and dividing nations and families is against humanity. We must dare to dream about new families in which one parent will come from the north and the other from the south, we must dare to dream about the return of the natural order of things of past centuries and millennia.

Dear friends, as a member of the Czech Parliament, I joined the inter-parliamentary group of friends of South Korea. From all my heart I sincerely hope that one day this will be the group of friends of unified Korea.

Let's not lose hope. After all, the lust for power is fuelled by weakness, by the inferiority complex and by being spiritually adrift, without any anchor in the ideals that transcend us all.

Let's appeal to politicians and to businesspeople who have a strong influence on them. Let's pray for them. "View the problems of world, of states as problems of people. Look through the eyes of parents as those eyes are full of hope, faith and love."

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