

UPF Yekaterinburg, Russia's: Russia in a System of Security on the Korea

Maria Nazarova

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Yekaterinburg, Russia -- UPF held a webinar to discuss Russia's role in relations with its Far East neighbors, in particular the Korean Peninsula.

The online conference "Russia and the Russian Far East in the Formation of a System of Cooperation and Security on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia" was held by the Russian chapters of UPF and the International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP), a constituent association of UPF, on March 18, 2021.

Speakers:

Dr. Yong-un Kim (Eugene Kim) from Russia, a leading researcher at the Center for Korean Studies, Institute of the Far East of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, and a former member of parliament of the USSR;

Professor Jung Soo Pak from South Korea, a former first secretary of the Republic of Korea's Embassy in Russia; currently a member of the advisory council of the Democratic Party of Korea on foreign affairs, security and unification; a member of the Democratic Party's Special Committee on Peace in Northeast Asia; a co-representative of the Kraskino Forum; vice president of the Christian Unification Society; deputy chairman of Eurasia 21 of the National Assembly Secretariat; president of the Northeast Asian Community Cultural Foundation;

Dr. Viktor Gaikin from Russia, a senior researcher at the Center for Global and Regional Studies, Department of Oriental Studies, Institute of History, Archeology and Ethnography of Peoples of the Far Eastern Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Vladivostok.

Serving as the moderator, Maria Nazarova, the president of UPF-Russia, said that one of UPF's initiatives is Think Tank 2022, focusing on Korean reunification. She expressed her hope that the Korea Reunification Webinar Series, hosted by UPF chapters in 150 countries, will lead to a variety of recommendations that can be implemented.

Mrs. Nazarova said that this initiative is a response to UPF co-founder Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon's focus on the Korean Peninsula. She and her late husband, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, who both were born in what is now North Korea, have initiated many programs, conferences, and projects throughout their lives to reunite Korea.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of their visit to North Korea, where they met with North Korean President Kim Il Sung to discuss the prospect of reconciliation. That meeting resulted in a number of projects implemented in North Korea, but to this day Korea remains divided.

Mrs. Nazarova said she hoped that the UPF Korean reunification webinars would lead to the creation of expert working groups of leaders in areas such as international relations, public policy, economy, trade and commerce, infrastructure development, personal exchange, humanitarian service and the arts.

"We are confident that the result of such work will be concrete proposals and their implementation for the

final resolution of the conflict on the Korean Peninsula, which, of course, will help to form a system of cooperation and security in the entire region of Northeast Asia and around the world," she said. "This is the direction of UPF until the year 2022."



Dr. Yong-un Kim started with a few words about the philosophy of Russia's approach and actions in this field:

"Let us note it as a fundamental provision that is of decisive importance for cooperation and security in the region. First, Russia does not call any countries of the region, as well as in the world in general, its enemy. And this is connected not only with Russia's adherence to the principles of the UN and its Charter, and Russia's strategy for a peaceful life, but also because there can be no sustainable peace between hostile states, and most importantly, no security system.

"I draw your attention to the fact that some countries in their closed and open documents directly call half of the countries in the region -- Russia, China and North Korea -- as their enemies. This implies a second important position: Russia is persistently striving to create a system, namely a system, and not some kind of short-term association, of security and cooperation."

Continuing his presentation, Dr. Kim said:

"Russia believes that such a system should be based on the most important, fundamental principle of equal and indivisible security for all countries in the region, as well as for all other regions and our planet as a whole. And such equal and indivisible security can be built only with equal cooperation, i.e., taking into account the interests of each country, solving issues that somehow affect the interests of any country or a group of countries that arise due to the natural uneven economic, political, social and cultural development, by political and diplomatic methods, by reaching a reasonable compromise, which always presupposes reciprocal steps toward each other and the search and finding of new forms of cooperation, including not only bilateral, but also three-, four-, region-wide projects that are equally beneficial to each of the countries participating in achieving this compromise.

"In particular, for example, this is the railway system connecting South Korea, North Korea and Russia; the energy production system, a system of cooperation in the field of medicine and epidemiology in Northeast Asia; it is the pipeline from Russia through North Korea to South Korea, including gas routes. In the implementation of these projects, an important role is assigned to the Far East, both as a transit region for a powerful flow of goods and as a potential source of high-tech goods and services, as well as a source of huge reserves of clean drinking water, and one of the suppliers of clean air and oxygen for the planet. World practice has proven that joint work in the economic sphere unites and creates conditions for solving political and security issues."

Dr. Kim stressed that Russia plays a stabilizing role in the region with its diplomacy of cooperation, military power, as well as the effectiveness of public administration demonstrated during the coronavirus pandemic. "The important role of Russia is also expressed in the fact that its approaches to the situation in the region proceed not only from a specific situation but also are based on the development of the problem from its origin and taking into account stages of its development, which allows us to see the roots and come to the solution of the main issue.

"If we are talking about the situation in Northeast Asia as a whole, then the main issue here is the interference of external forces in the region and the Korean problem. And in the Korean problem as such, the roots are the unresolved issue of the legal formalization of the end of the Korean War of 1950-1953, as well as the division of the Korean nation that has not yet been solved. With regard to the nuclear problem of the Korean Peninsula, we are talking about creating security guarantees for North Korea, as well as preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula and the role of external forces. President Vladimir Putin said on this occasion: 'We, together with other parties in this process -- with China, with the United States -- could, of course, make a certain contribution by creating and participating in the system of guarantees.'"

At the end of his speech, Dr. Kim said, that as for the problem of overcoming the division of Korea, Russia supports the most important provision of the Joint Declaration of June 15, 2000, by the leaders of the DPRK and ROK -- that this issue should be resolved by the Koreans themselves, without the intervention of other countries -- and supports all steps aimed at dialogue between the two Koreas.

The next speaker was Professor Jung Soo Pak from South Korea, who spoke on the topic "Peace and Security Platform in Northeast Asia: The Joint Project of Khasan International Airport."

First, Professor Pak spoke about the situation on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia under the Biden administration of the United States. During his visit to South Korea, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken sharply criticized the DPRK and spoke of numerous violations by the North Korean government of the rights of its own citizens. It was expected that the DPRK would make the final decision on the launch of missiles after Secretary Blinken's visit to South Korea. Professor Pak said the Pentagon has prepared a secret plan against North Korea and its leader Kim Jong-un, called OPLAN 5015. In this regard, it is obvious that this has caused the escalation of the situation on the Korean Peninsula, he said.

Professor Pak spoke about the activities of the Greater Tumen Initiative (GTI) and the position of neighboring countries. The Greater Tumen Initiative is supported by the United Nations Development Programme. In 1991, the initial development of the program was carried out. In 2005, the initiative was established. Since 2008, Russia has become involved in the activities of the GTI. Currently, the position of neighboring countries does not coincide, and the US economic sanctions against the DPRK and Russia have not been lifted.

Then Professor Pak raised his proposal for an international airport to be built in Russia's Khasan District near the border with China and North Korea. This airport project would revitalize the Greater Tumen Initiative, he said. It would be modeled on the EuroAirport Basel Mulhouse Freiburg on the border of France, Germany and Switzerland. In 1947, the new airport was opened -- the only airport in the world operated jointly by two countries (France and Switzerland). More than 8 million passengers are now served at this airport every year.

If a similar airport opened on the border of Russia, China and North Korea, a Skolkovo Northeast Asia Innovation Center could be built in the Khasan region. In Khasan, one can create a comprehensive center for social services to the population, including transport, trade, tourism, and environmental protection.

Professor Pak concluded that if these projects are implemented, firstly, the borders of the Khasan special economic zone can be expanded to launch new investment projects. Secondly, in the near future the Khasan-Rajin economic project may have a second chance for development, according to the Russian ambassador to the DPRK, Alexander Matsegor. Thirdly, after the coronavirus pandemic, the Tumen River region can and should become a new destination for recreation and health tourism in Northeast Asia. The Land of the Leopard National Park will be very popular for children. Fourthly, it is important to establish peace, stabilization and development in Northeast Asia, including on the Korean Peninsula. This requires the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, the fight against climate change and the prevention of weapons proliferation.

The next speaker was Dr. Viktor Gaikin from Russia. The theme of his speech was "Unification of the DPRK and the Republic of Korea in a Philosophical Futurological Context."

Dr. Gaikin explained that North and South Korea's reunification usually is considered in the context of relations between the DPRK, the ROK, the United States, China, and other nations.

He said: "I would like to look at the prospects for the reunification of Korean Peninsula in view of philosophical futurology. It is well known that complex evolving systems have their own patterns, development algorithms. And humanity, which has gone from primitive communities with appropriate tools to deserted factories, is no exception. Let's try to formulate the laws of the development of sapient communities on our planet, which, it seems to me, will bring us closer to understanding the Korean problem.

"If one tries to 'read' the matrix of the historical process using the Hegelian law 'negation of negation,' one can single out three historical stages (Hegelian triad): primitive society, class society, post-industrial society. As you know, according to Hegel, the third member of the 'triad' repeats the first one (the spiral of development), but at a qualitatively new level. Hegel believed that the history of humankind is a gradual development of the freedom of the individual. According to Karl Marx, unpopular today, 'The kingdom of freedom begins only when the work dictated by need and external expediency is no longer needed; therefore, by the nature of things, it lies on the other side of the sphere of material production proper.' Thus, the achievement of the kingdom of freedom (according to Hegel), as a leitmotif of the development of humankind, is realized only after a person leaves the sphere of material production (according to Karl Marx).

"Primitive society, hunting and gathering (dependence on nature) is Hegel's 'thesis,' and the transition to regular work (dependence on material production) is the antithesis. The development of technology (computerization, robotization) takes a person out of the sphere of production and leads to liberation from

any dependence (post-industrial society) -- synthesis.



"However, 'synthesis' (post-industrial society), as a repetition of the 'thesis' (primitive society) at the highest level, will also mean the transfer of the dominant conflict of primitive society to post-industrial society, which was the interracial confrontation between Mongoloids and Caucasians in Eurasia. The main and only goal of a racial war will be the complete destruction of the entire population of the antagonist race."

Dr. Gaikin said that, in his opinion, racial war is not inevitable. "An alternative (to self-destruction) path is that Russia, splitting the community of Mongoloid states and creating a 'Eurasian Union' (Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Korea, Japan), will become the third (interracial) power center of Eurasia, reducing to a minimum racial tension between the Mongoloid (China) and Caucasoid (European Union) poles of the planet.

"The concept of the Eurasian Union is the opposite of the well-known Chinese project, the Eurasian Transport Corridor (another name for Belt and Road). The One Belt One Way project, which is planned to bypass Russia, will lead to the isolation of Russia, the disorganization of the Eurasian space, its geopolitical transformation in favor of China's geostrategic interests.

"There is a saying: 'Ideas are in the air.' In 2011, President Putin's article on the Eurasian Union was published. Its quintessence is in this paragraph: 'We propose a model of a powerful supranational association capable of becoming one of the poles of the modern world and at the same time playing the role of an effective "link" between Europe and the dynamic Asia-Pacific region.'

"As if in response to the proposed forecast concept, South Korean President Geun-hye Park in 2013 proposed a similar program of international cooperation, the 'Eurasian Initiative' to create 'One continent' – 'Peaceful continent.' The meaning of the 'Era of Eurasia,' according to Geun-hye Park, is to create a community which will include the DPRK, the Republic of Korea, Russia, and Central Asia to build a large single market competing with the European Union. The current president of the Republic of Korea does not abandon Geun-hye Park 's concept. This concept has slightly changed and received a different name: 'Northern Policy.'"

In conclusion, Dr. Gaikin said that the creation of a single trade and economic space of the Eurasian states with the participation of both the DPRK and the Republic of Korea will contribute to their rapprochement and integration (which is inevitable within a single system) and, ultimately, will lead to the unification of the Korean Peninsula.

Poll Question

After the final presentation, a poll question was presented to the audience: Are intermediaries needed to unite North and South Korea? Of the participants of the webinar, 58 percent answered, "Yes."

The panelists also offered their opinions on this issue:

Dr. Yong-un Kim: "North Korea categorically rejects the interference of any intermediaries in unification. The joint declaration of the presidents implies that the work of unification is the work of the Koreans themselves and no one will help with this. Until the Koreans themselves agree on security guarantees, if they do, they could play on this. International countries, China, Russia, can help, but in the end it is up to the two countries."

Professor Jung Soo Pak: "This is not only an internal South-North [issue] but [also] an international issue. Korea is divided into two parts; this is not our desire, but a negotiation at the international level -- between the USA and the USSR. Therefore, this issue is difficult. First of all, it is necessary to carry out the unification ourselves, but according to international experience this is impossible. Therefore, you need to have different options: First, they themselves are trying and other countries are helping. This is ideal. Unfortunately, now neighboring countries have different conflicts with each other."

A representative of the Khasan region, Natalya Karpova, a two-term member of the Khasan district Duma (local council or parliament) and a school math teacher, was in the delegation from the Russian side to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong-un when he came to Russia to meet President Putin in Vladivostok in 2019. Commenting on the speeches of the webinar participants, she said: "All of us who live on the border with such large states want peace." When big investors enter the territory, it is always interesting, so she said she looks at the proposed international airport project only positively.

Question-and-Answer Session

Question from Yulia Kharlamova, a doctor of political science and a lecturer at the University of Transport: "How do you assess the prospects of the European Union with China's Belt and Road Concept?"

Dr. Viktor Gaikin: "The prospect is quite possible. The highway from Rajin [a North Korean port, now called Rason] to Khasan was very important during the USSR. Now, of course, much less because of the sanctions. South Korea, in my opinion, withdrew from this project. But in the future, the relationship will develop.

"Countries are very cautious about this concept. In Singapore there was a cartoon that, using this belt in the form of a rope that girdles the whole world, China maintains hegemony."

Question from Professor Adalbert Otshumampit Aloki, a doctor of administrative sciences at the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium: "We know that Russia has the diplomatic capacity to participate in international efforts to restore peace between the two Koreas. We would like to know what Russia can specifically do in the process of reuniting these two fraternal countries."

Dr. Yong-un Kim: "We can assist in the creation of projects, in which representatives from Korea and China and other countries can participate."

Professor Jung Soo Pak: "Why am I proposing a joint project specifically for the Khasan region on the border of China and Korea? I gave the example of the EuroAirport. For a long time, there were conflicts between France and Germany; it is very similar to the territory of the Khasan region. There were confrontations there too. The example of Europe is similar to the Khasan region.

"[With its special economic zone] Khasan is very attractive for South Korea. They are very fond of visiting the area. It is impossible through the territory of Russia; they mainly go there through China, there are Chinese bases there. It would be nice if there were Russian bases there. Therefore, Russia must play an important role in this."

Question from Jack Corley, the president of UPF in Eastern Europe and Eurasia: "What is China's attitude toward the Khasan international airport project?"

Professor Jung Soo Pak: "The Chinese side wanted to build an airport in the city on the Chinese territory about 10 years ago, but they didn't. This place is not suitable for an airport. For Russia and the DPRK, it is also not acceptable. The best thing is in the territory of Khasan. The Russian side must make efforts to implement this."

The Mr. Corley spoke about the International Highway (and Tunnel) Project that UPF founders Dr. and Mrs. Moon already proposed in 1981.