

Pioneers of the Jeju Forum

Recasting and Forecasting

East Asia Foundation

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History behind Jeju Forum's Creation and Significance

Won Heeryong

Everything has its own beginning. Fourteen years ago, pioneering visionaries saw Jeju's potential, and the first Jeju Forum would not have been possible without their dedication and hard work. The Jeju Forum has continued to undergo substantial development ever since and expanded its scope beyond building peace through diplomacy and security to include economy, culture, environment and energy. Today, I would like to invite some of the founding members who have contributed to the Jeju Forum's ascent to a leading public diplomacy forum to discuss the forum's past, present and future. First, let us talk about how the Jeju Forum came into existence.

Moon Chung-in

In the 1990s, Jeju was envisioned to become an international city to enable the free movement of goods, capital and talent amid a pressing need to

create a peaceful atmosphere on the Korean peninsula. The combination of two visions—"an international city with the free movement of people and goods" and "peace"—led to the new perception of Jeju Island as a symbol of peace, which gave rise to the Jeju Forum.

The forum was modeled after the World Economic Forum in Davos, which captures global attention every year. The Jeju Forum intended to become Asia's answer to the Davos Forum but with a focus on peace. In particular, the first Jeju Forum was held in 2001, marking the first anniversary of the first inter-Korean summit on June 15, 2000. After the Bush administration took office in 2001, however, inter-Korean and North Korea-U.S. relations grew strained. South Korea's Ministry of Unification arranged for then South Korean President Kim Dae-jung to join the Jeju Forum, celebrating the first anniversary of the inter-Korean summit and drawing international attention to the peninsula.

The Jeju Forum has maintained its identity as a strong advocate for peace and reached today's milestone thanks to the efforts many organizations

and institutions such as the Graduate School of Area Studies (GSAS) at Yonsei University, the Jeju Development Institute and the Jeju Peace Institute.

In particular, the forum has brought together four parties: 1) the Jeju provincial government, which takes the initiative in organizing the forum; 2) the central government (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), which serves as a sponsor; 3) the East Asia Foundation, a non-profit civil organization under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that was founded by Chung Mong-gyu, chairman of Hyundai Development Co.; and 4) the Pacific Century Institute, an international civic organization that arranged visits by former U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry and former U.S. Ambassador to Seoul Donald Gregg.

Lim Dong-won

The speech made by the late President Kim Dae-jung before the first Jeju Peace Forum underpinned the agreement made in the historic 2000 inter-Korean summit and highlighted the progress of inter-Korean relations in the past year and their future direction. In addition, Kim congratulated the organizers on the forum's creation and urged contributions to promote peace on the Korean peninsula and in Northeast Asia.

The Jeju Peace Forum was launched on the back of joint Korean-U.S. efforts to end the Cold War and realize peace on the Korean Peninsula. The administrations of Kim and U.S. President Bill Clinton coordinated their policy efforts to end the Cold War on the Korean Peninsula.

In particular, the visit to North Korea by William Perry, former U.S. defense secretary, addressed two security challenges facing the U.S., creating a turning point in inter-Korean relations. The first was that the U.S. inspection team disproved the suspicion that North Korea had established underground nuclear facilities in Kumchang-ri, Pyeonganbuk-do, in violation of the 1994 Geneva Convention. The second was that North Korea agreed to a moratorium on testing long-range missiles, which eased increased tension after the North's firing of a Taepodong missile, and set a new tone for bilateral negotiations on missile tests. The removal of the bottlenecks to bilateral talks set off the Perry Pro-



Won Hee-ryong

Gong Ro-myung



Don Gregg

Lim Dong-won



Spencer Kim

Moon Chung-in

cess, which is also known as the Korean Peninsula Peace Process.

The inter-Korean summit was held in 2000 for the first time since the separation of the two Koreas, building consensus on peace and unification and paving way for adoption of the June 15 North-South Joint Declaration. In the spirit of the declaration, efforts were made such as the Mount Geumgangsan Tourism Project, family reunions between those in both Koreas, the joint march at the 2000 Sydney Summer Olympics and the groundbreaking for construction of a railway and road linking South and North Korea on September 18, 2002, attracting international attention to the Korean peninsula.

Jeju emerged as a symbol of peace and a negotiating venue for the two Koreas to improve bilateral relations. The island hosted three high-profile inter-Korean conferences in September 2002 alone: a special envoy visit by Kim Yong-sun, secretary of



the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) (September 11-14); defense ministerial meetings (September 24); and the North-South Ministerial meeting (September 27).

The reconciliatory mood continued as Jo Myong-rok, a top North Korean military official, visited the U.S. on a goodwill mission and met then President Bill Clinton in October 2000. Washington and Pyongyang expressed their willingness to improve bilateral relations, announcing the U.S.-DPRK Communiqué on October 12. The visit was reciprocated by a landmark visit to Pyongyang by Madeleine Albright, then U.S. secretary of state, who held meetings with the North Korean leadership on October 23 and 25. As such, the Jeju Peace Forum was launched when the Korean Peninsula Peace Process gained momentum toward the end of the Cold War on the Korean peninsula and raised hopes

for a brighter future.

In the run-up to the second Jeju Forum, North Korea's relations with the U.S. and South Korea turned sour after George W. Bush became president in 2001. His administration renounced Clinton-era policies and pinpointed North Korea, Iran and Iraq as the "Axis of Evil" that would be targeted as part of his war on terrorism in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. Tension on the Korean peninsula escalated to a new height after Washington warned that North Korea could follow Iraq as a target for U.S. military action. Fortunately, President Bush voiced support for the Kim Dae-jung administration's "sunshine policy" of rapprochement with Pyongyang in the South Korea-U.S. summit in February 2002. There, the American president announced his willingness to solve all problems through negotiations and talks and asserted that the U.S. had no intention of attacking the North.

As a special envoy, I visited North Korea and met its then leader Kim Jong-il to discuss misunderstandings and restore inter-Korean talks. When I returned from North Korea in April, I joined the Jeju Forum at the request of Professor Moon Chung-in and held discussions with William Perry, former U.S. defense secretary, and Donald Gregg, former U.S. ambassador to Seoul.

Won Heeryong

Spencer Kim, I would like to ask you why you started working with the Jeju Forum. I understand that the Pacific Century Institute (PCI) made great contributions to the forum's formation in its early days. Could you explain the background of the institute's engagement and share your ideas of cooperation with the Jeju Forum?

Spencer Kim

I first traveled to Jeju to visit my friend Professor Moon's hometown. I was introduced to the former governor, Woo Geun-min, who provided me with the opportunity to work as a special economic adviser to the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province. When asked how to stimulate the Jeju economy and make Jeju Korea's answer to Hawaii, I proposed the creation of a conference center to promote tourism and make Jeju attractive to fellow Koreans, not to mention foreigners. At that time, hotels on Jeju stood empty on weekdays and were crowded only on weekends. Jeju was in desperate need of more international conventions to solve this problem. I advised that the private sector should take the initiative in hosting international conventions. It is great to see that the Jeju Forum has been established as a platform for cooperation between the public and private sectors.

Evaluation of Jeju Forum in Comparative Sense

Won Heeryong

Lim Dong-won, former Korean Minister of unification, provided valuable testimony on the role Jeju played in the Korean peninsula crisis during the government transition in the U.S. Let us turn to Gong Ro-myung, former Korean foreign minister. I would like to first express my gratitude to him for

taking part in the Jeju Forum over the past 10 gatherings. Please explain why you remain interested in the Jeju Forum, and as a former foreign minister, how would you evaluate the Jeju Forum's track record.

Gong Ro-myung

I first joined the Jeju Forum through an invitation from Professor Moon Chung-in. My ties with the Jeju Forum have continued thanks to my position as chairman of the East Asia Foundation, the cohost of the Jeju Forum, and as a former foreign minister.

Jeju Island emerged as a symbol of peace in 1991 when it hosted the summit talks between then Soviet Union President Mikhail Gorbachev and South Korean President Roh Tae-woo. Against this backdrop, the Jeju Forum was held on June 15, 2001, as a follow-up measure to the first inter-Korean summit. At that time, Asia did not have forums in which former presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers and defense ministers gathered to hold policy discussions. The Boao Forum for Asia in China's Hainan province is focused on economy, while the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore are devoted to security issues. In contrast, the Jeju Forum is meaningful in that it opens a dialogue in wide-ranging issues such as diplomacy, security, economy, society and environment. The Jeju Forum marked its 10th anniversary and has been around for the past 14 years. If I can compare the Jeju Forum to a person, it is still in the teenage years. It is our job to ensure that it can mature into a contributing member of the international community.

Jeju's Role in Improving Inter-Korean Relations

Won Heeryong

I would like to thank Donald Gregg, former U.S. ambassador to South Korea, for taking time from his busy schedule to attend the forum. Could you explain why you are especially interested in the Jeju Forum? In addition, you have visited North Korea six times and have insight on North Korean issues. Could you share your experience and opinion about the Jeju Forum and what role you expect Jeju will play in inter-Korean relations?

Don Gregg

It is a great honor to be here. My first visit to Jeju was in 1973, and I was fascinated with the beautiful scenery and have visited Jeju several times since then. Whenever I visit Jeju, I feel excited to see that efforts to develop Jeju in various ways have led to tangible results. In particular, it is personally meaningful that Jeju has developed into a symbol of peace.

In fact, I have special relations with the late President Kim Dae-jung. I saved his life two times, from his 1973 abduction to his death sentence. When the late President Kim Dae-jung took office, he personally invited me to his inauguration ceremony and asked me to look out for the interests of the Korean community in the U.S. and help improve inter-Korean relations.

Let me share behind-the-scene stories of inter-Korean relations. During the Clinton administration, Madeleine Albright, then secretary of state, after her visit to Pyongyang, characterized Kim Jong-il as a reasonable man in negotiations. U.S.-North Korean relations, however, entered a downward spiral due to President Bush's notorious "Axis of Evil" speech. At that time, I wrote a letter to Kim Jong-il in an attempt to improve bilateral relations. The North Korean government asked why I wanted to visit North Korea, and I said I would like to personally meet Kim Jong-il and received a formal invitation in two weeks. In hindsight, I think the U.S. State Department welcomed that I reached out to Pyongyang.

During my visit to Pyongyang, the first question I was asked by Kim Jong-il was why George W. Bush was so different from his father. I said, well, we're a big country, and the father was raised in New England. The son was born in Texas, and that makes a big difference. The second question was the policy of his administration, as (George W. Bush) had completely different policy stances from his predecessor. I answered that this is how democracy works. We exchanged constructive talks with humor.

Through my six visits to North Korea, I felt the necessity of continuing dialogue with North Korea. I believe Jeju has an ideal geography and environment to open up and exchange talks. I expect Jeju

will be a forum where the two Koreas continue talks and the Jeju Forum will sow the seeds of peace.

Jeju Forum's Most Visible Achievements and Needed Improvements**Gong Ro-myung**

Today, there are many forums and international conventions led by Track 1. The Jeju Forum is an international forum, which enables multilateral talks in the region at the Track 1.5 level, and has established itself as a leading forum for dialogue in Asia. In the Jeju Forum's 10-year history, prime ministers of major countries have participated, and I believe their rich experiences and insight have been incorporated in the policymaking process through dialogues with experts. As mentioned before, the Jeju Forum is the only forum in Asia that discusses diverse issues. It is time to add a finishing touch to the blueprint. I believe that North Korea's participation will make the Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity true to its name. I hope North Korea will come forward to the forum for dialogue. I believe when North Korea joins the forum, putting behind its suspicion and anxiety, it will make peace on the Korean peninsula more viable.

Moon Chung-in

As a professor member, I have participated in the Davos Forum for eight years and in many other international forums, which led me to believe that forums have become a venue for public diplomacy.

First of all, sustainability is the key to make a forum successful. In Korea, several provincial authorities started to hold international forums but failed to sustain momentum. It is difficult to carry on a legacy when the administration changes hands. In this regard, it is great that the Jeju Forum has marked its 10th anniversary.

The second key to success is a new set of ideas and a new agenda. Whether it is desirable for the forum to touch upon an extensive agenda or be devoted to a few specific topics such as peace or the economy should be further discussed. Of course, if the forum has various agendas on the table, it has a positive effect by engaging people from dif-

ferent walks of life. On the other hand, it raises the question of whether the forum needs selection and focus. It will take more discussions and soul-searching to shape the Jeju Forum's identity down the road.

The third key to a successful forum is focus on its role as a networking channel. People pay to attend the Davos Forum because they want to build personal networks and explore new ideas. The issue at stake, however, is how to increase voluntary participation in the forum if the focus is on non-economic issues such as peace.

The fourth element of success is an impact the forum can exert on the world, as Davos Forum has proved. Likewise, it is necessary to present ways to materialize the agenda discussed in the Jeju Forum. Realization of the agenda requires presidential participation. It is essential for presidents to take part in the Jeju Forum, creating an opportunity to share the government's new ideas.

Last but not least, it is necessary to bring the Jeju Peace Institute (JPI) back on track. I believe it is necessary for the local and central governments to help the JPI enhance its research capacity and financial standing, establish itself as a global research center and contribute to the development of the Jeju Forum.

Don Gregg

Consensus building is imperative if the two conflicting groups are to work together. I stayed in Seoul for a day before coming to Jeju. Narratives about North Korea were filled with negativity. I think the U.S. has played a role in fanning animosity toward North Korea. The Jeju Forum should help avoid repeating the same mistakes and enable a search for areas of shared interest for the two Koreas, paving way for inter-Korean cooperation.

Won Heeryong

The Jeju government has asked for the North to join the Jeju Forum on several occasions. The North informed us that it wanted to discuss it after the U.S.-South Korea military drill at the end of April. After the end of the exercise, the North notified that it could not attend the forum due to time constraints. Besides, the Jeju government plans inter-Korean co-

operation projects such as joint ecological research spanning the mountains Hallasan and Baekdusan in July and August, tourism development and shipment of tangerines to North Korea.

Gong Ro-myung

I believe that it will take more than the two Koreas' efforts to resolve North Korean nuclear issues on the Korean peninsula. However, inter-Korean talks cannot be delegated to anyone but the two Koreas. Having that as a principle, the largest challenge is how to implement dialogue in different segments. In this regard, I hope Jeju's tangerines will continue to serve as a messenger of peace and the governor keeps up his good work.

Moon Chung-in

The Jeju Forum is the work of not just one governor but rather stems from the cooperation of many governors. Some say Jeju is fraught with conflict and friction, but the Jeju Forum is a remarkable achievement. I admire Governor Won Heeryong of Jeju for his vision of the future. I hope that the Jeju Forum will contribute to promoting peace and prosperity on Jeju, the Korean peninsula and Northeast Asia and that the governor can bring about new changes under his five-year term.

Won Heeryong

I would like to thank you for the valuable advice and promise more efforts for the development of the Jeju Forum.

■■■ Policy Implications

- The Jeju Forum for Peace and Prosperity (formerly the Jeju Peace Forum) was launched in 2001 with the goal to bring peace and prosperity to the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. Since its first edition, the forum has faithfully served as Korea's best platform for public diplomacy and attracting political leaders, globally renowned scholars and experts in Korea and abroad to hold in-depth discussions on key issues in the region. Marking the forum's 10th anniversary, the 2015 Jeju Forum looks back on the event's past and casts light on the road ahead.