

Institute for
Korean Studies

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



서울대학교 통일평화연구원
The Institute for Peace and Unification Studies
Seoul National University

North Korea Economic Forum
Thursday, May 4, 2023 at 9:00 - 10:30 AM (EDT)

REVIEWING NORTH KOREA'S PROGRESS ON
REFORMS IN AGRICULTURE AND FINANCE

GW한국학연구소
Institute for Korean Studies
서울대학교 통일평화연구원

“Reviewing North Korea’s Progress on Reforms in Agriculture and Finance”

Session I: Evaluating North Korea's Agricultural Sector

Session II: Assessing North Korea’s Financial ‘Reform’ Measures

Thursday, May 4, 2023

9:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M. (EDT)

10:00 P.M. – 11:30 P.M. (KST)

Virtual Event via Zoom

EVENT DESCRIPTION

North Korea remains a black box to outside watchers who strive to understand the current status of the country’s economy. Although Pyongyang’s extremely strict COVID policies, including the closure of its borders, are largely still in place, the economy seems to be muddling through without any news about a full-scale disaster. However, the ruling Workers’ Party convened a plenary meeting dedicated to the “urgent task of improving the agricultural sector” last February. In following up on the decisions made at the plenary meeting, the government agencies were also urged to strengthen the country’s financial foundation and financial discipline to support the comprehensive development of their socialist construction. We invite you to join the GW Institute for Korean Studies and the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies at Seoul National University for an online discussion on North Korea’s progress on reforms in agriculture and finance.



PROGRAM

	WELCOMING REMARKS
9:00 - 9:05 AM (EDT)	<p>Jisoo M. Kim (Director, GW Institute for Korean Studies) Bumsoo Kim (Director, Institute for Peace and Unification Studies, Seoul National University)</p>
	SESSION I: EVALUATING NORTH KOREA'S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR
9:05 - 9:35 AM (EDT)	<p>Moderator: Yonho Kim (Associate Director, GW Institute for Korean Studies)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachel Minyoung Lee (Regional Issues Manager and Senior Analyst, Open Nuclear Network) • Young-Hoon Kim (Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Korea Rural Economic Institute)
	SESSION II: ASSESSING NORTH KOREA'S FINANCIAL 'REFORM' MEASURES
9:35 - 10:05 AM (EDT)	<p>Moderator: Bumsoo Kim (Director, Institute for Peace and Unification Studies, Seoul National University)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William Brown (Chairman, North Korea Economic Forum, GW Institute for Korean Studies) • Hyeok Jeong (Professor, Seoul National University)
10:05 – 10:30 AM (EDT)	Q&A

PROFILES (Alphabetical Order)

◇ SPEAKERS



BUMSOO KIM is Professor of Political Science and Dean of the College of Liberal Studies (CLS), and the Director of the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies (IPUS) at Seoul National University (SNU). At SNU, he previously served as the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and the Associate Dean of Student Affairs of CLS, and as Deputy Director of IPUS. In academia, he served as Vice President of the Korean Political Science Association, Executive Secretary of the Korean Association of International Studies, President of the Korean Society for Governance Research and Secretary General of the Korean Society for Political Thought. He also previously taught at the Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington as the Y.T. Shim Endowed Visiting Professor and was a Foreign Research Scholar at the Institute of Social Science at the University of Tokyo. In the public sector, he currently serve as a committee member of the Korean Government's Policy Committee for Overseas Compatriots. His main academic research areas include justice, human rights, identity politics, nationalism, multiculturalism, and many other issues of contemporary political theory. His articles have appeared in many academic peer-reviewed journals such as the *Journal of Korean Studies*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, and the *Social Science Japan Journal*. He has also published a number of books (in Korean) which include *What Is Fairness in the Korean Society?* (2022) and *What Is Peace Studies?* (2022). He received his M.A. in Political Science from the University of Chicago and Seoul National University and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Chicago.



JISOO M. KIM is Korea Foundation Associate Professor of History, International Affairs, and East Asian Languages and Literatures. She currently serves as the Director of the Institute for Korean Studies and the Co-Director of the East Asia National Resource Center at GW. She also serves as the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Korean Studies*. She is a specialist in gender, law, and emotions in Korean history. Her broader research interests include gender and sexuality, crime and justice, forensic medicine, literary representations of the law, history of emotions, vernacular, and gender writing. She is the author of *The Emotions of Justice: Gender, Status, and Legal Performance in Chosŏn Korea* (University of Washington Press, 2015), which was awarded the 2017 James Palais Prize of the Association for Asian Studies. She is also the co-editor of *The Great East Asian War and the Birth of the Korean Nation* by JaHyun Kim Haboush (Columbia University Press, 2016). She is currently working on a book project tentatively entitled *Sexual Desire, Crime, and Gendered Subjects: A History of Adultery Law in Korea*. She received her M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. in East Asian Languages and Cultures from Columbia University.



YOUNG-HOON KIM is currently serving as an Honorary Senior Researcher at the Korea Rural Economic Institute and is an expert in North Korean agriculture and agricultural cooperation. He has visited North Korea

many times in connection with inter-Korean agricultural cooperation projects and has advised project implementers and the government. He has contributed to the creation and implementation of relevant policies by serving as a member of various government committees. He served as a member of the Presidential Preparation Committee for Unification (2014~2017) and as Chairman of the Inter-Korean Cooperation Subcommittee in the Special Commission on Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Policies (2019~2021). He is a member of the Unification Ministry's Policy Advisory Committee and a standing member of the National Unification Advisory Council. In the wake of the resumption of inter-Korean economic cooperation, his recent research publications include "Agricultural Exchange and Cooperation Initiative" (KREI, 2019) and an "Analysis of North Korea's Agricultural and Livestock Trade Trends and Future Prospects" (KREI, 2018). He received his Ph.D in Economics from Korea University.



RACHEL MINYOUNG LEE is the Regional Issues Manager and Senior Analyst with the Vienna-based Open Nuclear Network and a Nonresident Fellow with the 38 North Program at the Stimson Center. Lee was a North Korea collection expert and analyst with Open Source Enterprise under the CIA from 2000 to 2019. During that time, she wrote on the gamut of North Korean issues, from leadership, domestic politics and the economy, and foreign policy, to social and cultural developments. As Analysis Team Lead, Lee led a team of collection officers and analysts to track and analyze North and South Korean issues with implications for Pyongyang's regime stability and regional security. Since leaving OSE, Lee has been cited regularly by leading global media outlets, to include The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, and The Financial Times. Lee earned her B.A. in English literature and her M.A. in international law, both at Korea University



HYEOK JEONG has served as a Professor at Graduate School of International Studies at the Seoul National University since 2015. He previously worked at the Economics departments of the University of Southern California and Vanderbilt University, at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) in Japan, and also at the KDI School of Public Policy and Management in South Korea. He was a Visiting Scholar at the University of Chicago, UCLA, and the Institute of Empirical Macroeconomics of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. He also worked at the World Bank as a Consultant Economist and served as the Director of Development Research Division of Center for International Development at KDI. Professor Jeong's main research interests are various areas of growth and inequality with a particular focus on finance and human capital. His recent research agenda includes Korean development experience, the North Korean economy, demographic transition, science and technology innovations, smart city urban development, macroeconomic dynamics of land and housing, firm dynamics and international trade, higher education reform, and international development cooperation issues such as knowledge sharing and development finance to facilitate global development. He also serves in the public sector by consulting the Korean government and public agencies (the Blue House, the Office of the Prime Minister,

the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport, the Ministry of Unification, the Bank of Korea, the Export-Import Bank of Korea, and the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry) as well as US public agencies (the National Committee on American Foreign Policy) and international agencies (the World Bank, UNDP, UNFPA, OECD, and DAC). He received his B.A. in Economics from Seoul National University and Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Chicago.



WILLIAM B. BROWN (Bill) is Chair of the North Korea Economic Forum at the GW Institute for Korean Studies (GWIKS). He is also principal of his consulting company, Northeast Asia Economics and Intelligence Advisory, LLC (NAEIA.com) and is an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, where he teaches courses on the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean economies. Mr. Brown served a career in the federal government, working as an economist and East Asia specialist at the Central Intelligence Agency, Commerce Department, and National Intelligence Council (NIC). At the NIC, he served as Senior Research Fellow for East Asia and as Deputy National Intelligence Officer for Economics. His most recent service was as Senior Advisor to the National Intelligence Manager for East Asia in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. Mr. Brown's research is focused on the North Korean and Chinese economies and he is widely quoted in national and Korean media, especially with Voice of America. His publications include "Money and Markets in North Korea," an unclassified study for the National Intelligence Council, and the "Economics of Korean Unification" published by the Council of Foreign Relations.



YONHO KIM is an Associate Research Professor of Practice and the Associate Director of GW Institute for Korean Studies. He specializes in North Korea's mobile telecommunications and U.S. policy towards North Korea. Kim is the author of *North Korean Phone Money: Airtime Transfers as a Precursor to Mobile Payment System* (2020), *North Korea's Mobile Telecommunications and Private Transportation Services in the Kim Jong-un Era* (2019) and *Cell Phones in North Korea: Has North Korea Entered the Telecommunications Revolution?* (2014). His research findings were covered by various media outlets, including Wall Street Journal, The Atlantic, Yonhap News, and Libération. Prior to joining GWIKS, he extensively interacted with the Washington policy circle on the Korean peninsula as Senior Researcher of the U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, Senior Reporter for Voice of America's Korean Service, and Assistant Director of the Atlantic Council's Program on Korea in Transition. He holds a B.A. and M.A. in International Relations from Seoul National University, and an M.A. in International Relations and International Economics from Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

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BACKGROUND

The North Korea Economic Forum (NKEF) is part of the policy program at the George Washington University's Institute for Korean Studies (GWIKS). The Forum aims to promote the understanding of North Korean economic issues, distribute well-balanced, deeply touched, and multi-dimensionally explored pictures of the North Korean economy and to expand the network among the various North Korean economy watchers. The Forum is mostly a closed and off-the-record meeting where participants can freely and seriously discuss the critical issues. Mr. William Brown is currently the chair of the NKEF and is leading the meetings. It also organizes special conferences made public throughout the academic year. The Forum is made possible by a generous grant provided by the KDI School of Public Policy and Management.

This event is on the record and open to the public.