

# Korea Chair Monitor

July 10 - July 23, 2014

*The Korea Chair team takes a biweekly look at events of interest in Washington, Seoul, and the region.*

## REGIONAL RELATIONS

### ***ROK-China Defense Strategy Dialogue***

The Fourth Defense Strategy Dialogue was held in China on July 22. Vice Defense Minister Baek Seung-joo of South Korea led the ROK delegation and the Chinese delegation was led by the Chinese People's Liberation Army Deputy Chief of General Staff Wang Guanzhong. The two agreed to establish a military hotline between their defense ministers by the end of the year, making China the second country besides the United States to have this high-level hotline.

### ***ROK Six-Party Talks Envoy Visits Japan***

The ROK special representative for Korean peninsula peace and security affairs, Hwang Joon-kook, visited Japan from July 15 to 17 for talks with Japanese officials, his first visit to Japan since he took the post in April of this year. On July 15, he met with his Japanese counterpart, Foreign Ministry Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau Director-General Junichi Ihara, to discuss developments on the Korean peninsula and the region.

## TRADE AND ECONOMICS

### ***Korea-China Hold 12th Round of FTA Negotiations***

After a week of negotiations from July 14 to 18, the Korean and Chinese delegations were able to make headway on the bilateral free trade agreement (FTA). They agreed on the principles of market liberalization and made progress in customs procedures, economic cooperation, and government procurement. They reached a full agreement on competition and commerce. In the services sector, the two delegations agreed to use a positive list approach when the FTA takes effect and switch to a negative list approach during follow-up negotiations. The 13th round of negotiations is scheduled for September in China.

## DOMESTIC POLITICS

### ***Park Geun-hye Launches Committee on Unification***

The Blue House announced on July 15 the inaugural members of the Presidential Committee for Unification Preparation, with the first meeting set to take place in early August. The presidential committee, part of President Park Geun-hye's "unification bonanza" campaign, will be chaired by Park herself, with Unification Minister Ryoo Kihl-jae and former ambassador to China Chung Jong-wook as vice chairs. The preparatory committee will consist of 50 members, including 30 private experts, 2 lawmakers, 11 government officials, and 6 heads of state-run think tanks.



### ***Portuguese President Visits Seoul***

President Anibal Cavaco Silva of the Portuguese Republic visited Seoul from July 19 to 21 for a summit meeting with President Park Geun-hye where the two leaders signed two memoranda of understanding (MOUs) for bilateral cooperation in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and tourism, according to a July 21 Blue House briefing. President Silva is the first Portuguese head of state to make an official visit to the ROK.

*Photo credit: Cheong Wa Dae.*



### ***New ROK Ambassador to Japan***

On July 22, President Park nominated Yoo Heung-soo, a former four-term National Assembly member and chairman of the Korea-Japan Friendship Association to be the new ambassador to Japan.

*Photo credit: Flickr Creative Commons / Les Taylor's Photostream*

**DOMESTIC POLITICS (continued)*****Kim Moo-sung Elected New Chairman of Saenuri Party***

Representative Kim Moo-sung was elected on July 14 as the new chairman of the Saenuri Party, defeating his main opponent, Representative Suh Chung-won. Runner-ups, Representatives Suh Chung-won, Kim Tae-ho, Rhee In-je, and Kim Eul-dong, will be members of the Saenuri Party's Supreme Council. Kim's first major task as chairman is to lead the party to win the majority of seats in the National Assembly in the upcoming by-elections on July 30.

**INTER-KOREAN RELATIONS*****Rare Inter-Korean Sports Meeting Breaks Down***

North Korean delegates unilaterally walked out of the first inter-Korean meetings on sports since 2008, prematurely ending a meeting held in Panmunjom on July 17 to coordinate the logistics of North Korean participation in the September 19 - October 4 Incheon Asian Games, also known as Asiad. At the meeting, the North Korean delegation, led by Vice Minister of Physical Culture and Sports Son Kwang-ho, announced plans to send 350 athletes and 350 cheerleaders to the Asiad. Despite leaving the meeting without setting a date for a second gathering, the North Koreans announced three days later through the official Korean Central News Agency that Pyongyang holds "great expectations for the games."

**NORTH KOREA*****UN Security Council Chastises North Korea***

The UN Security Council on July 17 "condemned" the recent series of ballistic missile launches by North Korea as "violations of Security Council resolutions," according to Ambassador Eugene Richard Gasana of Rwanda, president of the Security Council. In addition, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon issued a note through his spokesperson that the recent launches "clearly violate" Security Council resolutions that ban the DPRK from "conducting any launch using ballistic missile technology." North Korea fired six Scud missiles on three separate occasions between June 29 and July 13.

***U.S. Navy Arrival in Busan, South Korea***

On July 11, the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet Command, the George Washington Carrier Strike Group (GWCSG), arrived in Busan for a scheduled port visit. The strike group performed community relations and held a welcome reception for ROK business, civic, and military leaders. The GWCSG then joined the U.S., South Korean, and Japanese trilateral navy search and rescue exercise, SAREX, from July 21 to 22 in international waters south of the ROK's Jeju Island.

*Photo credit: U.S. Navy Photo Stream by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Frank L. Andrews.*



The *Korea Chair Monitor* will take a break during the month of August for summer holidays. Watch for the next issue of the *Monitor* in early September and follow us on Twitter throughout August for the latest headlines.

**Looking Ahead**

***Our Friday morning preview of events to watch in the weeks ahead.***

- **July 27** | The 61st anniversary of the Korean War armistice.
- **July 30** | By-elections will take place for 15 Seats in the ROK National Assembly.
- **August 9 - 10** | Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se of South Korea will attend the annual ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), scheduled to take place in Naypyidaw, capital of Myanmar.
- **August 14 - 18** | His Holiness Pope Francis will visit the Republic of Korea on a four-day tour, marking the first time the Catholic pope has visited Asia since 1995. The trip will include visits to *Sewol* ferry victims and a meeting with President Park.

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