

## Impact Players

### *Hong Yong-pyo*

By Heeyoun Baek

#### Who is he?

Hong Yong-pyo, is a current Blue House secretary for unification issues who was nominated by President Park Geun-hye as the unification minister on February 17, 2015.

Minister Hong entered politics by joining Park's transition committee in late 2012. With the launch of the new administration in 2013, President Park tapped Hong as her presidential secretary for unification. Dr. Hong assisted President Park for two years and is widely known to have played a key role in crafting President Park's policies on unification affairs. During his career, he was appointed as a South Korean delegate for rare high-level talks at the border village of Panmunjom in February 2014.

Minister Hong was a research fellow at Korea Institute for National Unification for four years and served as the head of the Institute of Unification Policy in Hanyang University.

Originally from Seoul, South Korea, Dr. Hong received his B.A. and J.D. from Yonsei University, and a Ph.D. in international relations from Oxford University. He was also a professor of political science and diplomacy at Hanyang University before stepping into politics.

#### Why has he been in the news?

President Park carried out a partial reshuffle of the Cabinet on February 17, nominating three new ministers for unification, maritime, transport and financial regulation. All the nominees must undergo confirmation hearings at the National Assembly, however, only the prime minister has veto power.

#### What can we expect from him?

The nomination of Dr. Hong by the Blue House suggests that President Park considers him a trustworthy confidante on inter-Korean affair, having worked with President Park on the inter-Korean issues since 2010. He is expected to facilitate President Park's trust-building process on the Korean Peninsula.



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