

## Impact Players

### **Kim Kyou-hyun**

By Heajin Kim

#### **Who is he?**

Kim Kyou-hyun is the new Senior Secretary to the President for Foreign Affairs and National Security at the Blue House.

Previously, Mr. Kim held the position of First Deputy Director of National Security and was also Secretary-General for the National Security Council Secretariat in the Office of National Security at the Blue House (2014 – 2015).

Mr. Kim is a distinguished career diplomat. Prior to joining the Blue House, he served as the First Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs from March 2013 to February 2014. He has held various high-ranking positions during his government career including: Deputy Minister for Political Affairs (May 2012 – March 2013); Ambassador for Performance Evaluation (February 2010 – April 2012); Special Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs (December 2009 – January 2010); and Director-General of the International Cooperation Bureau at the Ministry of National Defense (February 2006 – July 2007).

Mr. Kim's diplomatic career began in 1980, and throughout his career he has had various assignments in the U.S., including: Minister for Political Affairs and Deputy Chief of Mission of the ROK embassy (2007 - 2009); Counselor (2002 - 2004), and Second Secretary (1986). He has also held positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, where he served as Director of North America Division 1 (2000 – 2002) and Deputy Director-General of the North American Affairs Bureau (2004 – 2006). Interestingly, unlike a typical South Korean diplomat, Mr. Kim not only have an M.A. in Public Administration from Harvard University, but he also have a D.D.S. from Seoul National University's School of Dentistry.

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

On October 19, President Park Geun-hye nominated Kim Kyou-hyun as her new senior secretary for foreign affairs and national security, replacing Ju Chul-ki, who had held that position since the beginning of her administration. The transition took place amid growing criticism of an agreement between the ROK government and a U.S. company regarding the purchase of F-35 fighter jets and the U.S. refusal to transfer four core technologies needed to develop the ROK's KF-X stealth fighter project. First Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Cho Tae-yong was promoted to fill Kim's vacant position of First Deputy Director of National Security. Cho's previous position of First Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs was filled by Lim Sung-nam, formerly the ROK Ambassador to the United Kingdom.

#### **What can we expect from him?**

Kim Kyou-hyun is one of the most experienced senior officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dealing with the U.S. Though his public profile may not be high, he is well-known and well-connected among policy players in Seoul and Washington. His experience to date in the Blue House as First Deputy Director of National Security and as Secretary-General for the National Security Council Secretariat makes him one of the few in the decision making circle who knows the Blue House, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of National Defense very well. This will make him more of a point person for governments dealing with the ROK.

