

CJK Cooperation Dialogue 2014

JEF Starts New Communication Channel with Japan's Neighbors

By Mayumi Inoue



Nov. 13, 2014 Was an Historic Moment for JEF

It was cloudy and cold and almost about to snow in Seoul on the evening of Nov. 12, 2014 when we arrived at the Plaza Hotel, the venue for our first China-Japan-Korea (CJK) Cooperation Dialogue. A couple of heated but thoughtful preparatory discussions with a Chinese academic mentor to the Chinese leaders, Dr. Zhang Yunling, director of International Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and a South Korean academic leader, Dr. Chung-in Moon, professor of political science at Yonsei University, had enabled JEF Chairman Kazumasa Kusaka to create a consensus to organize an annual public forum for Track 2 or 1.5 policy discussions among the three countries. These three gentlemen, representing either a national think tank or a university, have created a new venue for unofficial policy discussions not by government officials but by a group of thinkers representing each nation's opinion leaders. Such discussions would make it possible to have informal exchanges of views among leading thinkers who could have a strong influence upon each government's policies. We call such leading thinkers Track 2 or 1.5 people and any consensus achieved by these informal discussions could influence the decision-making process for each country's policies. The China Foreign Affairs University, the East Asia Foundation in South Korea and JEF, following this consensus, decided to cooperate with each other to organize our first annual Track 1.5 public forum in Seoul on Nov. 13, 2014.

This was truly an historic moment for us, since these talks are aimed at reaffirming constructive trilateral relations that benefit all three nations and overcoming the challenges of territorial and historical issues.

Photo: JEF



The weather in Seoul on the previous day did not seem to welcome our initiative. Our South Korean friends worried that it might even have snowed on the day of the talks, when preliminary university entrance examinations were being held in South Korea and some students might miss their exams due to traffic problems caused by the snow.

Contrary to their worst fears, however, it was a sunny day on Nov. 13, an auspicious start to the new project.

FTAs & Environmental Policy — Issues for the 1st Discussion

We selected two issues for our first policy discussion at the CJK Cooperation Dialogue: the first was free trade agreements (FTAs) and the second environmental policy. We believe that FTAs should be discussed not only in terms of trade liberalization but also in terms of domestic structural reforms necessary to minimize their possible negative impacts and to maximize their benefits for national economies, as well as their possible geopolitical impact upon foreign relations. In this light, we discussed such issues as FTAs' actual impact on growth and welfare, the challenges and limitations of compensation mechanisms for overcoming the costs of FTAs, such as in the case of agriculture or for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and their long-term economic, political and social implications.

We particularly examined the possible impediments to a CJK FTA and it was noted that in terms of economic and political impact, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and a CJK would be mutually interactive through a competitive trade liberalization process. Possible progress on the TPP would encourage China and South Korea, which are not members of these talks, to proceed with negotiations on a CJK FTA in order to avoid being economically and politically isolated from an Asia-wide trade liberalization process.

The second issue, environmental policy, focused on emerging environmental concerns and trilateral cooperation. The discussions highlighted possible collaboration among the three nations to modify the environmental challenges facing them. After identifying trans-boundary pollution problems, the panelists introduced their views on their economic, social, and ecological consequences and devising trilateral cooperation. I noted the passion of the speakers on environmental policy coordination, seemingly affected by the meeting between the leaders of the United States and China at the APEC summit held the previous day in which they showed their

willingness to take initiatives in global plans for CO2 reduction.

Both sessions, as well as a formal dinner and luncheon, were extremely well organized by our East Asia Foundation colleagues who hosted this public forum, which was attended by approximately 100 members of the public. Their great efforts were a key to the success of the meeting, in particular our confirmation of the decision to continue our dialogue in 2015 in China.

Friendly Discussions Show We Can Be Good Friends

I think it is noteworthy that the friendly atmosphere of our candid discussions, occasionally punctuated by laughter and jokes, signified that we could be good friends with each other and understand each other well, based on our common East Asian culture.

I believe we can be good global leaders through collaboration and make an invaluable contribution to global peace and prosperity.

We have only just started this great process and I am sure we will make good progress this year in China.

I am very proud to have been a part of this process as a staff member of JEF, and I am very much looking forward to writing another encouraging report on our discussions in China in 2015.

[Appendix]

List of speakers at the CJK Cooperation Dialogue 2014

The 1st CJK Cooperation Dialogue

Date: November 13, 2014

Venue: Maple Hall, Plaza Hotel, Seoul

Chinese Participants

Guo Yanjun

Associate Professor and Deputy Director of Institute of Asian Studies, China Foreign Affairs University

Huan Qingzhi (panelist of session 2)

Professor, School of Marxism, Peking University

Qu Bo (panelist of session 1)

Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the Institute of International Relations, China Foreign Affairs University

Shen Minghui (panelist of session 1)

Associate Professor and Director of the Research Division of National Institute of International Strategy, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)

Wang Xuedong (panelist of session 2)

Professor, Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies, Sun Yat-sen University

Zhang Yunling (moderator of session 1)

Professor and Director of International Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS)

Zhu Caihua (panelist of session 1)

Professor and Dean of School of International Economics, China Foreign Affairs University

Observers:

Jin Meihua

Researcher, Center for Northeast Asia Studies of Jilin Academy of Social Sciences

Ma Ke

Professor of Economics, Jilin Academy of Social Sciences

Shi Youmei

Professor in Science-Technology, Jilin Trilateral Cooperation Studies

Center of China Council for the Promotion of International Trade
Jilin Provincial Committee

Japanese Participants

Yukiko Fukagawa (panelist of session 1)

Visiting Fellow, Center for Development Studies/Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Cambridge University

Naoyuki Haraoka

Executive Managing Director, Japan Economic Foundation (JEF)

Shigehito Ibuka (panelist of session 2)

Executive Director, Japan Environmental Management Association for Industry (JEMAI); Division Manager, Environment and Safety, Quality Management Center, HORIBA

Kazumasa Kusaka

Chairman and CEO, Japan Economic Foundation (JEF)

Makoto Shiota (panelist of session 1)

President, SME support, Japan (Organization for Small & Medium Enterprises and Regional Innovation, JAPAN)

Shujiro Urata (panelist of session 1)

Professor of Economics, Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies, Waseda University

Mitsutsune Yamaguchi (panelist of session 2)

Visiting Professor, Komaba Organization for Educational Excellence (KOMEX), College of Arts and Science, University of Tokyo

Korean Participants

Choong-yong Ahn (panelist of session 1)

Chairman, Korean Commission on Corporate Partnership / Distinguished Professor, Graduate School of International Studies, Chung-Ang University

Dukgeun Ahn (panelist of session 1)

Associate Dean of International Affairs / Professor, GSIS, Seoul National University

Se Young Ahn (keynote speaker, dinner)

Professor, GSIS, Sogang University / Chairman, National Research Council for Economics, Humanities and Social Sciences

Mi-Ae Choo (panelist of session 1) (keynote speaker, luncheon)

Member of the 19th National Assembly Republic of Korea

Suh-Yong Chung (panelist of session 2)

Professor, Division of International Studies, Korea University

Ro-Myung Gong

Chairman, East Asia Foundation / former Minister of Foreign Affairs

Eui-Chan Jeon (panelist of session 2)

Professor of Environment and Energy, Sejong University

Jeong-Woo Kil (panelist of session 1)

Member of the 19th National Assembly, Republic of Korea

Sang-Hyup Kim (moderator of session 2)

Visiting Professor, Graduate School of Green Growth, KAIST / Chairman, Coalition for Our Common Future

Chung-in Moon

Professor of Political Science, Yonsei University

Eui Soon Shin (panelist of session 2)

Professor of Economics, Yonsei University

Observer:

Hyung Taek Hong

Secretary General, East Asia Foundation; Associate Managing Editor, Global Asia

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Mayumi Inoue is a member of the international programs section in the operations department of JEF.