Korea Policy Forum:
Wednesday, January 29, 2020, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Room 505, Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University
1957 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20052

◊ Event Description

Domestic Politics is a key factor in shaping security and foreign policy of states. South Korea is not an exception. In the South Korean case, the dynamic domestic political geography plays a significant role in Seoul’s strategies with North Korea and the U.S.-ROK Alliance. With the upcoming general elections in April, the political landscape in South Korea will be shifting in the coming months, leading to a potential repositioning of South Korea’s foreign and security policy. Two former and current policy advisors for the ROK government, including the President’s Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of National Defense, will discuss the prospects of a new domestic political geography in South Korea and its potential impact on Seoul’s foreign and security policy.

Speaker: Young-jun Kim

Dr. Young-jun Kim is a Professor of the National Security College at the Korea National Defense University (KNDU). He is now a member of National Security Advisory Board for the Republic of Korea President’s Office (the Blue House) and a member of advisory board for the Department of Unification. His recent publications include Origins of the North Korean Garrison State: People’s Army and the Korean War at Routledge (2017). He is a member of the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Commander’s Strategic Shaping Board (CSSB) and an International Senior Research Fellow at the U.S. Army’s Foreign Military Studies Office (FMSO) at Fort Leavenworth. He is a policy advisor on North Korean issues for the National Security Office of the ROK President’s Office, the National Assembly, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of National Defense (MND), National Intelligence Service, the Joint Chief of Staff and the ROK-U.S. Combined Forces Command. He is a managing editor of the new journal "The Korean Journal of Nuclear Nonproliferation and Energy" sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the General-Director for the Korea Nuclear Policy Society and Korea Defense Policy Association. As Korean security expert, he has appeared on the FOX TV News, CBS TV News, BBC TV News, Wall Street Journal, the National Interest, Kyodo News and other Korean and international media.

Speaker: Sang-hyun Lee

Dr. Sang-hyun Lee is a Senior Research Fellow at the Sejong Institute. Dr. Lee also serves as President of the Korea Nuclear Policy Society (KNPS). He served as Director-General for Policy Planning of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) from May 2011 to April 2013 and policy advisor for Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of National Unification, and Ministry of National Defense. Dr. Lee was a research fellow at the Korean Institute for International Studies (1987-88), and the Korea Institute for Defense Analysis (1988-90), He received his B.A. and M.A. from Seoul National University and Ph.D. from the Department of Political Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1999.
Discussant: John Merrill

Dr. John Merrill is nonresident visiting scholar at GWIKS. Dr. Merrill is the former chief of the Northeast Asia Division in the State Department’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research. He has taught at the Foreign Service Institute, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Georgetown University, the George Washington University, and Lafayette College. For many years, he chaired seminars on North Korean Foreign Policy for mid-career Intelligence Community analysts/managers. Merrill is the author of Korea: The Peninsular Origins of the War and The Cheju-do Rebellion (in Japanese). His most recent pieces include “Inside the White House: The Future of US-DPRK Policy,” Korea Observer, Winter 2016 and op-eds for Nikkei Asian Review. Merrill has a Ph.D. from the University of Delaware, an M.A. from Harvard University, and a B.A. from Boston University.

Moderator: Jisoo M. Kim

Jisoo M. Kim is Korea Foundation Associate Professor of History, International Affairs, and East Asian Languages and Literatures and Director of the Institute for Korean Studies at GW. She received her Ph.D. in Korean History from Columbia University. She is a specialist in gender and legal history of early modern Korea. 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 two book projects titled Suspicious Deaths: Forensic Medicine, Dead Bodies, and Criminal Justice in Chosŏn Korea and Sexual Desire and Gendered Subjects: Decriminalization of Adultery Law in Korean History.

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