



U.S. - Republic of Korea Interparliamentary Exchange

April 13-16, 2003

Introduction

Purpose of the Exchange

The United States-Republic of Korea Interparliamentary Exchange was established in 2000 as an ongoing series of reciprocal visits between leading members of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the U.S. House of Representatives. The exchange program was designed to promote dialogue and strengthen relationships among the participants through periodic roundtable discussions to take place both in the United States and Korea.

Exchange Sponsors

The U.S. Congress and the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea sponsor the exchanges. Since the program's inception Congressman Edward R. Royce, Chairman of the U.S.-Korea Interparliamentary Exchange, has led the U.S. delegation, and the Honorable Dr. Jay



Kim Yoo, Chairman of the U.S.-Korea

Chairman Ed Royce (right) and Vice Chairman Xavier Becerra

Interparliamentary Exchange Council, has led the Korean delegation. The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of Citizen Exchanges, assists the exchange financially under the authority of the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961, as amended. The Delphi International Program of World Learning provides logistic and administrative support under a State Department grant.

History of the Exchange

The first visit, from January 9 to 12, 2000, took a U.S. delegation to Korea under the leadership of Representative Ed Royce. The U.S. delegation included

Representatives Doug Bereuter, Greg Walden, Gary Ackerman, Xavier Becerra, Robert Underwood, and Karen McCarthy, as well as five members of their staff. The second visit from July 9-12, 2001, was held in the United States. Korean parliamentarian Jay Kun Yoo led a delegation to Washington composed of seven Members of the Republic of Korea National Assembly, including Woong Kyu Cho, Seung Heui Ham, Jae Hyong Hong, Sung Soon Kim, Chang Bok Lee, and Wong Hong Park, and two staff members

In addition to increasing understanding of their counterparts' perspectives on a wide range of political, security and economic issues, some concrete projects grew out of these visits. For example, following the 2001 visit, the U.S. delegation introduced concurrent resolution (HCON 213 IH, 107th Congress, 1st Session) expressing the sense of Congress regarding North Korean refugees who are detained in China and returned to North Korea where they face torture, imprisonment, and execution. The resolution encouraged the Government of China to honor its obligations under the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951.

The third exchange took a U.S. delegation to Seoul, Korea, from April 13-16, 2003. The exchange coincided with the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Republic of Korea - U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty. Participants in the exchange, again led by Chairman Ed Royce, include Vice-Chairman Xaxier Becerra, the Honorable Adam Schiff, and the Honorable Madeleine Z. Bordallo, as well as Congressional staff members Thomas Sheehy, Young Kim, Denise Lee, and Edward Burrier, accompanied by Delphi staff member Vlad Spencer. The



Reps. Kim Un-Yong (left) and Park Sang-Cheon

Korean delegation included the Honorable Kim Un-yong, the Honorable Park Sang-Cheon, the Honorable Cho Woong-Kyu, the Honorable Lee Jong-Gul, the Honorable Ki-Jai Kim, the Honorable An Kyung Yul, the Honorable Kim Yong Kyun, the Honorable Hahm Seung-Heui, the Honorable Mi-ae Choo, the Honorable Chun Jung-bae, the Honorable Jung-sook Kim, the Honorable Yong-Taek Chun, the Honorable Lee Byung Suk, the Honorable Chung Dong-young, the Honorable Duk-kyu Kim, and the Honorable Chung Woo-Taik.



Bilateral and International Background

The April 2003 recent Interparliamentary exchange took place during times of great political, military and economic change and turmoil.

As preparations for the exchange were made, the war to remove Saddam Hussein from power was well underway. Just days before, it had become apparent that his regime was rapidly falling away and coalition forces were in control. Global attention had then shifted to other so-called rogue nations which U.S. President George W. Bush had referred to as the “axis of evil” bringing North Korea and, thus, the entire Korean Peninsula increasingly into the spotlight.



A number of bilateral developments formed a backdrop for the exchange:

- North Korea announced it is open to multilateral discussions about its nuclear program – a decision welcomed by the United States. Specifically, U.S. Secretary Colin Powell citing conciliatory statements by North Korea said “a lot of pieces have come together” in his quest for multilateral discussions on Pyongyang’s nuclear weapons program. This was a major shift for the Communist regime, which had previously insisted on one-on-one talks with Washington.
- South Korea decided not to attend a U.N. Human Rights Commission vote on a resolution condemning North Korea’s alleged human rights violations. Seoul chose to shun the vote to avoid inciting North Korea at a time when its bid to open dialogue on the North’s nuclear program had begun to make progress.
- Also, on the political front, President Roh Moo hyun announced a visit to the United States within a month’s time. President Roh, elected on a promise to redefine U.S. -centered diplomacy, declared that one of his top priorities during the upcoming U.S. trip would be to strengthen the two countries’ relationship. Shortly after the announcement that President Roh would travel to the U.S. in May, the U.S. Congressional delegation met with the Korean leader.

Security issues between the U.S. and Korea were also heating up, with growing public interest in Korea over the ongoing negotiations between Seoul and Washington regarding the realignment of the 37,000 strong force of American troops stationed in Korea. One of the most controversial issues is a U.S. plan to

move the 2nd Infantry Division posted near the border area with the North to south of the Han River in the second half of 2003. The United States began to consider these changes last December amid a peak in anti-American sentiment, triggered in part by the death of two schoolgirls accidentally run over by a U.S. military vehicle.



On the economic front, fear over a possible economic slowdown in Korea has been triggered by the security uncertainty related to the North Korean nuclear threat. Among the noticeable signs of stagnation were depressed production, consumption and exports, as well as rising consumer prices.



U.S. - Republic of Korea Political and Security Relationship

FIRST PANEL OF THE 2003 EXCHANGE

All participants in the April 2003 Interparliamentary exchange reaffirmed the strong foundation of the U.S.-Korea security relation and invited a realistic and pragmatic approach when dealing with differences. “By discussing in an open fashion challenging issues, the U.S.-Korea Parliamentary exchanges gain strength”, U.S. Chairman Ed Royce said in his opening statement. The discussion in the first roundtable focused on recent developments in North Korea in light of other issues on the forefront, such as the war on terrorism and ways to deal with North Korea.



Gen. Leon Laporte, Commander USFK briefed the Congressional delegation

A series of factors including North Korea’s development of a nuclear weapons program, 9/11 terrorist attacks in the U.S., and anti-American sentiment among a young generation of Koreans are reinforcing the need for a renewed direction of the ROK-U.S. alliance. The speakers stressed that this relationship has contributed to the maintenance of peace and security in the Korean Peninsula and has played an important role in securing stability in the region.

The U.S. delegation expressed gratitude for the decision by the Korean Parliament to send hundreds of non-combat troops to the Persian Gulf.

North Korean Threat Response

It was clear that all participants around the table shared a deep mistrust of the current North Korean leadership fed by years of broken promises and agreements on the part of President Kim Jung Il. At the heart of the discussion was the growing global concern over the Communist regime’s clandestine nuclear program. The U.S. delegation expressed a sense of approval over a recent decision by North Korea to consider a multilateral format of negotiations regarding the nuclear issue. Both U.S. and Korean participants view this problem as a regional one and, thus, a lasting solution must involve the input of all affected parties. During the press conference, organized at the end of the exchange, the U.S. legislators reaffirmed that the U.S. Congress does not support a preemptive strike against North Korea to end its nuclear program. They

stressed, however, that the U.S. approach requires compliance verification of any agreement, given the numerous violations of past agreements entered into by the North Koreans.

The 5th Joint Meeting of the Korea - U.S. Inter-parliamentary Exchange
제5차 한·미의원외교협의회 합동회의
날짜: 2003. 4. 15 장소: 국회귀빈식당 주최: 한미의원외교협의회



Korea Herald

U.S. Rep. Ed Royce (R-Calif.) and his counterpart Rep. Park Sang-cheon shake hands as they open the annual joint meeting of the Korea-U.S. Inter-parliamentary Exchange at the National Assembly in Seoul yesterday.

‘Congress will nix N.K. strikes’

U.S. delegation told to hold plans to relocate troops

By Kim Hyung-jin

Congress does not support notions of a preemptive strike on North Korea to end its nuclear activities, a visiting U.S. lawmaker said yesterday.

Ed Royce, head of the U.S. congressional delegation, said that there is no one in the Congress who would support a military campaign on Pyongyang and a war on the Korean Peninsula.

Royce, a Republican from California, spoke at the 5th joint meeting of the Korea-U.S. Inter-Parliamentary Exchange at the National Assembly in Seoul. Three other U.S. congressmen also attended the annual conference.

The delegation said the U.S. Congress hails recent indications of Pyongyang's willingness to accept Washington's demands for

multilateral talks on the nuclear standoff between the two sides.

It added that in such a multilateral framework, concerned countries need to verify whether the North has an intention to push ahead with its nuclear weapons program.

During the one-day conference, some 10 Korean lawmakers urged the United States not to redeploy its 37,000 troops here before North Korea's nuclear issue is resolved.

The relocation of the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division, they said, away from the border with North Korea will weaken forces deterring an invasion by the North.

"At this critical moment, any U.S. troop redeployment or reduction, albeit on a small scale, might have the North mistakenly believe that its push for the withdrawal of American troops is succeeding," said Rep. Cho Woong-kyu of the

opposition Grand National Party (GNP).

Rep. Park Sang-cheon of the ruling Millennium Democratic Party (MDP) echoed Cho's view.

"We have to delay the discussion on the troop reconfiguration until after the nuclear standoff is resolved, as that might trigger economic instability and shrink the level of foreign investment," Park said.

"Particularly, the redeployment of the 2nd division makes it harder to make the North move its stock-piled conventional arms from the border area, as our bargaining chips will be slashed greatly," Park said.

The Korean lawmakers took joint steps in calling for the two nations to maintain the 50-year-old Seoul-Washington military alliance for the time being.

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The American delegation also warned against the danger of artificially bolstering a non-functional and dangerous regime in North Korea. Concerns were expressed about North Korea's proliferation activities. Exports of military technology were traced to countries such as Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Libya, India, Pakistan and Egypt.

All delegates agreed that this complex and dangerous situation should provide added unity in the security relationship between the United States and South Korea.

A portion of the exchange was dedicated to the perception of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il and an assessment of the threat posed by Pyongyang.

Participants reaffirmed that the past 50 years proved that the North Korean regime misused political power and acted time and time again against the welfare of its own people.



U.S. Congressional Delegation at the DMZ

The Korean participants explained that, like the United States, Korea also has “hawks” and “doves” when it comes to dealing with its northern neighbor. In analyzing the approaches to the leadership of Chairman Il, the speakers presented several scenarios.

A segment of Korean society believes that the North Korean leader is not trustworthy and, consequently, does not want to engage a dialogue with his regime of terror. Another segment's take is driven by the goal of reunification and views openness towards North Korea as a way to accomplish it. Korean participants in the exchange said that the Bush administration's perception of North Korea as a dangerous, untrustworthy communist dictatorship is correct. The Korean political elite understands that, after September 11, the leadership of the United States is interested in shutting off as much as possible, all over the world, terrorist networks and their supporters. In this regard, North Korea's history of developing arms of mass destruction and its role in proliferation are major deterrents in trying to deal with Pyongyang as a legitimate member of the world community. However, several Korean participants in the exchange

recommended what they view as a realistic treatment of North Korea, based on engaging Pyongyang and establishing a dialogue, in order to solve the nuclear issue.

It is the view of some of the Korean participants in the exchange that, although there are doubts about the North Korean regime's sustainability, it is Seoul's mission to help its impoverished neighbor. North Korea, several speakers said, has hit bottom in terms of socio-economic status and could now be enticed to follow acceptable norms of international conduct. They argued that the United States and the Republic of Korea should work together in order to convince North Korea to abandon its nuclear program.

A Korean participant explained that there are voices in Korea that argue that the North Korean regime is near to its natural collapse, following the model of Eastern and Central Europe. However, others argued that, the experience of the last 10 years proves that the regime is extremely resilient. International sanctions will not work in this type of circumstances, since North Koreans are accustomed to poverty. There is also a risk that in the next 5 to 10 years, the North Korean regime will develop enough nuclear devices to become a major international threat. In analyzing potential regional leverage, a participant argued that China does not want the Kim Jong Il's regime to collapse. Consequently, Beijing is a major exporter to North Korea and also opposes international sanctions.



Visit to the DMZ

The Korean speakers expressed hope that Kim Jong Il will feel what they called the "Baghdad effect" and will bend under pressure from the international community. They argued that in order to solve the nuclear issue, help is needed from the major regional players such as the United States, China and Japan. If the North Korean nuclear crisis is not solved in a timely fashion, it could trigger an arms race in East Asia, with Japan already possessing enough plutonium to produce nuclear devices. Participants underlined that a full-blown nuclear program in North Korea could generate public opinion pressure in the south to develop similar technology. The participants stressed the grave danger posed by potential escalation of the conflict in the peninsula, underlining that there is no other viable alternative than a peaceful solution to the problem.

Human Rights and Refugee Issues

During the 2001 exchange the issue of human rights in North Korea played prominently in the discussion, with a special emphasis on the situation of North Korean defectors in China. As a result of those discussions, the U.S Congress enacted, at the initiative of Congressmen Royce and Becerra, a non-binding resolution asking China to grant the escapees refugee status.

During the April 2003 exchange, the U.S. delegation met with North Korean defectors and participated in a general meeting of the International Congressional Coalition for the North Korean Defectors and Human Rights Issues. There, lawmakers from five countries called on China and the United Nations to recognize the official refugee status of North Korean defectors.



U.S. Congressional delegation at the International Parliamentarians' Coalition for North Korean Refugees and Human Rights

Lawmakers' Group Demands NK Defectors' Refugee Status

By Sung Tae-kyung
Staff Reporter

Lawmakers from five countries yesterday called on China and the United Nations to recognize the official refugee status of North Korean defectors.

They launched the International Parliamentarians' Coalition for the North Korean Refugees and Human Rights (IPCNR) in Seoul. The 33-member coalition is composed of 24 lawmakers from South Korea, four from the United States, three from Japan and one each from England and Mongolia.

Rep. Hwang Woo-yea, chairman of the coalition's organizing committee demanded immediate attention to the 100,000 North Korean refugees scattered across China and other North East Asian countries, who are under the threat of being captured and repatriated.

"I am quite baffled when the government says North Korea's

nuclear issue should be the priority when infringement on human rights of North Koreans is a reality," said U.S. Congressman Ed Royce, a ranking member of the International Relations Committee. He compared the North Korean refugee situation to that of the Jews during the Nazi regime. Royce added that the House has unanimously decided to accept the request to recognize the refugee status of North Korean asylum-seekers.

At the beginning of a general meeting, Kim Ok-in, a North Korean refugee who fled to China in 1996 and entered South Korea in 2001, explained the horrible living conditions North Koreans face when hiding out in China. "It does not have to be South Korea, the refugees wish to be transferred to any third country, as long as they are not sent back to North Korea," Kim said.

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Korean and foreign lawmakers listen during a ceremony to inaugurate the International Parliamentarians' Coalition for North Korean Refugees and Human Rights in Seoul, Wednesday.

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It is the U.S. participants' view that any policy on North Korea should include a human rights component. One of the Korean participants in the exchange said, however, that emphasizing human rights at this point in time would be counterproductive because it would distract attention from the real and immediate goal: the nuclear issue. Participants acknowledged that the human rights violations in North Korea are severe and well known. But several speakers said that unless the international community sets its priorities straight by emphasizing the nuclear crisis, progress is not going to be made on either issue. Some of the Korean participants argued that if a serious attempt is made to reign North Korea in on human rights violations through the use of sanctions, the communist regime would immediately complain of external meddling in its internal affairs and shut off other useful channels of communication for trying to solve the pressing security issue.

Several Korean participants said that as a result of the “sunshine policy,” more North Koreans participated in various exchanges with South Korean citizens which provides as a rare look into the situation in the secretive north. Before the new policy of openness, the North Korean regime routinely persecuted its citizens who had relatives in the south. This policy has since been abandoned. The Korean legislators pointed out these improvements as concrete proof that engaging – rather than isolating North Korea can lead to improved human rights, quality of life and awareness in the communist country.



The U.S. Congressional delegation met recent North Korean defectors

A Korean participant in the exchange said that, at this point in time, the international community should not personally attack Chairman Kim Yong Il as such judgmental pronouncements are counterproductive. “It is difficult to negotiate with Kim Yong Il if you call him a dictator,” the speaker argued. German reunification was mentioned as a model of pursuing a realistic and measured policy and avoiding an emotional reaction.

A U.S. speaker in the exchange made the point that the German example proves that a judgment based on morality is useful in trying to undermine a tyrannical regime. If the international community doesn't speak publicly, the North Korean people would not be able to assess the serious damage that the regime is inflicting on its own people and the threat it represents. "Engagement," the American speaker said, "might be worth it only if it works both ways". Another U.S. participant expressed the view that the North Korean regime will not compromise its longevity for the sake of concessions made to the international community. Therefore, the speaker said, it would be useful to know what North Korea could be given that would be valued more than the nuclear program in terms of security and visibility. A challenge, the speaker noted, is to figure out how to persuade North Korea to believe that rather than making the regime more secure, the nuclear program represents a security liability.

U.S. Troops Deployment Debate

As the leadership of the U.S. military in Korea reiterated during meetings with the Congressional delegation prior to the exchange, North Korea continues to maintain a million soldiers within 50 kilometers of the demilitarized zone (DMZ) and continues to pose the danger of another conventional war in the Peninsula with its 12,000 pieces of artillery aimed towards Seoul.



Lunch with troops at the DMZ

Based on the recognition of such tension, uncertainty and instability, the Korean participants in the exchange believe that a decision to relocate U.S. troops inside Korea, at this point in time, would seriously diminish defense capabilities and would send jitters throughout the Korean economic system. The speakers argued

that the war deterring function of the 2nd Infantry Division would be compromised by such a premature relocation. As a fallout of the perceived perception of a diminished U.S. military presence, foreign investors would think twice before making investments in Korea.



Members of the Congressional delegation at the DMZ

of the Han River at one point, but only after a reduction of North Korea's conventional forces and dismantling of nuclear programs.

In addition, Korean participants suggested that the issue of relocation could eventually be used as a bargaining chip in trying to obtain similar concessions from North Korea. This potential negotiating position would be squandered, they argued, if a decision to relocate was made now. It may be possible to consider moving United

States Forces in Korea (USFK) bases to the south



U.S. - Korea Economic Relationship

SECOND EXCHANGE PANEL

The economic roundtable of the April 2003 Interparliamentary exchange involved a lively discussion on a wide range of topics from steel and auto trade, tariffs, quotas, and intellectual property protection.

There was a clear consensus among those sitting around the table that the existing economic partnership between the two countries is mutually beneficial. Despite instability and the consequences of the Asian financial crises, U.S. investment in Korea remains strong. The speakers pointed out that increased transparency will help improve the economic climate for trade and investment. With \$60 billion in trade with Korea, the United States contributes 18.4% of the total Korean trade and absorbs 20.8% of Korean exports. U.S. is also the largest investor in Korea with \$4.5bn in 2001.

The participants in the exchange emphasized that in 2003, Korea made progress in the process of economic recovery and will continue to do so unless security concerns overshadow the drive for development, transparency and enforcing the laws already in the books.

Several trade issues were raised during the economic segment of the exchange. The Korean participants expressed concerns about the U.S. Department of Commerce preliminary decision to levy a 57.37 percent countervailing tax on Korea's Hynix's memory chip imports. The U.S. government's ruling is in response to a complaint filed by Micron Technology Inc. that government-backed lenders in Korea unfairly subsidized Hynix by bailing out the troubled firm. The

Korean participants in the Exchange argued that if confirmed and enforced, the measure invites controversy since the Korean government did not have control over the loan package to Hynix. Moreover, the credits were part of a recovery package recommended by the International Monetary Fund after the financial crisis in Asia. From the U.S. Government initial perspective it was difficult to freely accept in the market a competitor which was so heavily subsidized in a \$8bn bailout. The U.S. Commerce Department will start a two-week due diligence review of Hynix Semiconductor and its creditor banks ahead of its final ruling on a countervailing investigation into the South Korean chip maker.



Reps. Becerra and Bordello during the economic roundtable

The U.S. side raised the issue of the automotive trade imbalance between the two countries. The American participants noted that out of more than 1.2 million cars annually sold in Korea, only some 2,300 are U.S. - made. At the same time, Korea annually exports 580,000 cars to the U.S. In trying to explain the current imbalance, Korean speakers argued that issues such as fuel efficiency, or at least a perception that American cars are not fuel-efficient and that European cars have a better resale value, still hinder U.S. automobile sales in Korea. The GOK plans to streamline the taxation policy to create a fairer market for foreign manufacturers. The American participants asked the Korean counterparts to suggest a message by President Roh stating that buyers of foreign cars will not suffer any negative consequences. In the early 1990's Koreans who purchased foreign cars were subjected to tax audits.



The Congressional delegation met with Korean and U.S. business leaders at a dinner hosted by Gyeonggi Province Governor Sohn

The completion of the General Motors deal to acquire a portion of Daewoo Industries was praised as a step in the right direction in order to encourage more foreign presence in the Korean auto market. GM Daewoo Auto & Technology Co, which is being used by the American giant as a platform for its Asian operations, represents only the second case in South Korea's market where an overseas auto maker has been able to gain a production foothold. Another issue raised during the exchange dealt with the classification for certain pickup trucks in Korea, which triggers heavy taxation for certain American trucks classified as passenger vehicles.

U.S. companies' ability to increase their presence on the Korean pharmaceutical market was also discussed. Participants in the exchange appealed to Korean

regulatory bodies to consult and notify companies of any changes they propose in order to create a more inviting business environment.

The Korean delegates expressed concern over the Bush administration decision to impose 8 to 30 percent tariffs on 14 steel product categories. They described these rates as excessive, considering that Korea has been cooperative in controlling production amidst global oversupply and seeing through self-initiated industrial restructuring. According to reports, Korea exported \$6.7 billion worth of steel products last year, of which \$1.1 billion (about 15 percent) went to the United States. Exports of the 14 products on the U.S. tariff list are said to make up about \$600 to 700 million. In the U.S. participants' view, the new regulations are based on the perception that the struggling U.S. steel industry is faced with unfair competition from abroad.

On intellectual property the U.S. representatives appreciated the good faith effort made by the GOK in order to comply with international regulations. The U.S. side underlined, however, that a more transparent process would avoid certain misperceptions and would help better market foreign products in Korea.



Chairman Royce at the luncheon hosted by Vice Speaker Kim Tai-Shik

In addition, U.S. participants questioned the procedural framework and relative lack of transparency behind a Korean review board's decision to protect the Korean movie industry by requiring local theaters to screen Korean movies for over 146 days or a period that covers roughly two fifths of total screening days in a year. The Korean participants in the Exchange view this quota system as part of the cultural preservation policy enforced in many developed countries and supported by international bodies such as UNESCO.

The Korean participants underlined the goal of more fully integrating the Korean economy into the world economy. The goals of the Roh administration, as stated by the Korean participants in the exchange, are to sustain institutional reform and deregulation and to promote market fairness and corporate accountability. The Korean participants attempted to dispel worries that the new administration in Seoul will focus on wealth redistribution to the detriment of economic reform and market driven policies.



Perception of the Relationship

OVERRIDING THEME OF BOTH PANELS

Media reports both in Korea and the U.S. have been filled with stories of anti-U.S. sentiment becoming more visible in recent months. After two local schoolgirls were accidentally run over and killed by a U.S. armored vehicle in June last year, Koreans began to speak out against what they viewed as the unequal relations between the U.S. and South Korea. Tens of thousands of people took part in candle-light vigils and anti-American rallies to protest the acquittal of the soldiers involved and to demand a revision of the legal code governing U.S. troops stationed in Korea. With the start of the war in Iraq, many student activists took an anti-American position against what they believed to be unilateral and imperialistic action by the U.S. government.

The Korean participants in the exchange acknowledged that certain segments of the population have a negative and critical view of the United States and act accordingly. Their complaints vary widely encompassing a wide array of issues such as the environment and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), apparently without giving a serious thought to the nature of the North Korean regime and the security threat it represents. The American participants stressed that though they are generally aware of the fact that this vocal segment is a minority, the U.S. public could eventually wonder why 37,000 men and women in the military would be kept in a country where they are not wanted.

The Korean delegation praised the value of the last 50 years of fruitful alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea. The participants argued however that even the best alliances need nurturing. It was mentioned that



April 2003 Exchange Press Conference

younger Koreans are concerned about the country's sovereignty and standing in the world and would like a more "horizontal" relationship with the United States. In the views of several Korean participants in the exchange, the younger generation's understanding of the history and nature of the U.S. - Korea relationship is not adequate. When the young protesters look at the United States they see only USFK (United States Forces in Korea) and not the reality of an alliance based on common values. There is a certain segment of the population, the speakers said, which views the bilateral relationship as being disproportionately tipped towards U.S. interests. The Korean school system was partially blamed for not explaining well enough how the U.S. emphasizes democracy and values of freedom. Korean participants in the exchange would like the young generation of their country to know and understand the extent of the U.S. human sacrifice during the Korean War, when some 30,000 American lives were lost for freedom in the peninsula. The Korean participants stressed that recent anti-American sentiments do not signal the people's desire to change the friendly and cooperative relations between ROK and the U.S.



Conclusion

After several hours of discussions in two panels on Tuesday April 15, 2003 the exchange was concluded. The event is viewed by both sides as an opportunity for the participants to contribute to a better understanding between the two people. It was agreed that the next exchange will take place in the United States. A date for that exchange will be set in the near future.

