

October 11, 2012 | By Christine Clark

U.S. and Korean Ambassadors to Discuss Conflicts in Northeast Asia at UC San Diego

Campus hosts U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea's Ambassador to the U.S. for a public forum



U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea, Sung Kim and the Republic of Korea's Ambassador to the U.S., Young-jin Choi

Important changes are taking place on the Korean peninsula, including elections in the South and the succession and possible reforms in the North. Yet, progress on the denuclearization of the peninsula through multinational talks remains blocked. The U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Sung Kim, and the Republic of Korea's Ambassador to the U.S., Young-jin Choi, will reflect on these recent developments and the current state of the U.S.–Korea alliance during a public forum “The Future of the Korean Peninsula and the U.S.-Republic of Korea Alliance.” The forum will take place at 5 p.m., Oct. 25 at the University of California, San Diego's School of International Relations and Pacific Studies (IR/PS).

The forum will be moderated by Susan Shirk, Ho Miu Lam Professor of China and Pacific Relations at IR/PS and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs.

According to Shirk, “Northeast Asia is a tense and unsettled region these days because of nationalist disputes over maritime claims, anxieties about the North Korean nuclear and missile threat and uncertainties about China's future trajectory.”

She added, “As close allies, the Republic of Korea and the U.S. are working together to address these issues, although they don't always have the same perspective on them—this forum is a rare opportunity to have a candid discussion with the Ambassadors about the security dynamics in the region.”

Prior to Kim's appointment as Ambassador of the U.S. to the Republic of Korea he was the special envoy for the Six-Party Talks, which are aimed at finding a peaceful resolution to the security concerns of the North Korean nuclear weapons program through a negotiating process involving China, the U.S., North and South Korea, Japan and Russia. From August 2006 to July 2008, he headed the office of Korean affairs at the Department of State and he has served in a variety of positions in the East Asia Pacific region including overseas assignments in Seoul, Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong.

Choi, the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the U.S., was United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's appointed special representative for Côte d'Ivoire. In this role, Choi was mandated to certify the Ivorian presidential election of fall 2010 and defuse the political crisis that arose in its aftermath. In January 2004, Choi was appointed South Korea's vice minister of foreign affairs and trade, followed by an appointment as South Korea's Ambassador to the U.N., a position he filled until he was appointed a resident diplomat scholar at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University.

The forum will take place from 5 to 6:30 p.m. at the Institute of the Americas Auditorium on the UC San Diego campus. There will be media availability with Kim and Choi preceding the forum, from 4:15 to 4:45 p.m. at IR/PS's Dean's Complex.

For more information, and to register to attend, go to irps.ucsd.edu/media-center/events/events_20120822.htm.

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