

Event Report

Symposium Summary

“The Korean Peninsula in an ‘Age of Uncertainty’ and
Japan’s Foreign/Security Policy” Study Group
Fiscal Year-end Open Symposium
(Monday, March 11, 2019, 13:30-15:30; The Tokai University Club)



<Overview>

- Date/time: Monday, March 11, 2019; 13:30-15:30
- Venue: The Tokai University Club
- Program (honorifics omitted):
Opening remarks: Yasunori NAKAYAMA (Director General (Acting), JIIA)
Session (Moderator: Study Group Leader)
 - Briefing by Study Group Leader on key research topics and issues being addressed
Masao OKONOGI (Professor Emeritus, Keio University)
 - Report ①: “The Security Environment on the Korean Peninsula and Recent Developments”,
Hideya KURATA (Professor and Director, Global Security Center, National Defense Academy;
Adjunct Fellow, The Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA))
 - Report ②: “Overview of the 2nd US-North Korea Summit and the Prospects of US-North Korea
Relations”, Hajime IZUMI (Professor, Tokyo International University)
 - Report ③: “Japan-South Korea Relations at Present and Proposals for Managing Relations”,
Junya NISHINO (Professor, Keio University)
 - Question-and-answer period

<Description>

The Japan Institute of International Affairs held this open symposium as one of the FY2018 activities of “The Korean Peninsula in an ‘Age of Uncertainty’ and Japan’s Foreign/Security Policy” Study Group

comprising part of the “Bottom-up Review of Security Policy” research project, with the aim of making public and refining some of the Study Group’s findings.

This symposium featured presentations on the outcomes of the second US-North Korea summit meeting held in Hanoi in February 2019 and the current state of Japan-South Korea relations. It was pointed out, for instance, that the US-North Korea summit meeting should not simply be dismissed as an inconclusive failure, but instead attention should be given to the fact that the flow of the talks had been “steered back” toward denuclearization and non-proliferation. Analysis was also presented showing that, as a result of North Korea having opposed the idea of only negotiating on denuclearization, the inadequate groundwork done in preparation left the talks reliant on chancy top-down direct bargaining. On Japan-South Korea relations, the view was offered that it is important in managing the conflicts between the two countries to first build a consensus on the current state of bilateral ties and then create a new framework for relations between Japan and South Korea with due consideration for broader regional circumstances.

About 130 participants attended the symposium, and the question-and-answer session saw a vigorous discussion centered on US-North Korea negotiations, Japan-South Korea relations, and Japan’s role in addressing the situation on the Korean peninsula.