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NEW SOUTHERN POLICY PLUS
Reinforced Commitment Towards Building Prosperous Partnerships

26 NOVEMBER 2020
10:00 - 12:00 (GMT+8)
In November 2017, South Korea introduced the New Southern Policy (NSP), which underscored that there would be significant advantages to diversifying Korea’s diplomacy and deepening its ties with Southeast Asia.

After three years, President Moon Jae-in announced during a video-linked Korea-ASEAN Summit on 12-15 November 2020 a more advanced version of his New Southern Policy, now called the “NSP Plus,” which renews South Korea’s commitment to promoting and strengthening ties with the ASEAN countries.

In this webinar, renowned scholars and experts will share their insights and prospects about NSP Plus, and discuss how focusing on its three core pillars (Peace, Prosperity, People) can further intensify cooperation with ASEAN on various fronts.
NEW SOUTHERN POLICY PLUS:
Reinforced Commitment Towards Building
Prosperous Partnerships

Organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in the Republic of the Philippines and the UP Korea Research Center

26 November 2020 (Thu) | 10 AM - 12 PM (GMT+8)

OPENING

10:00 - 10:05  Event overview & House rules

10:05 - 10:10  Opening Message by H.E. Dong-man Han
AMBASSADOR
EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

Congratulatory Message by
Atty. Danilo L. Concepción
PRESIDENT
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

SESSION I

Moderator: Dr. Aldrin Lee
OIC-Director, UP Korea Research Center

10:10 - 10:40  Keynote Presentation by Dr. Won-gi Choe
KOREA NATIONAL DIPLOMATIC ACADEMY

10:40 - 11:10  Discussion of the Review of New Southern Policy in the lens of the Philippines

Prof. Victor Dindo Manhit
STRATBASE ADR INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Dr. Aaron Jed Rabena
ASIA PACIFIC PATHWAYS TO PROGRESS FOUNDATION, INC.

Dr. Michelle Palumbarit
ASIAN CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES DILIMAN
SESSION II

Moderator: Prof. Raisa Lumampao, Assistant Professor, University of the Philippines

11:10 - 11:50

Roundtable on Prospects and Recommendations for New Southern Policy Plus

Dr. Andrew Yeo
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Prof. Frances Antoinette Cruz
CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

Prof. Mark Ysla
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT FAR EASTERN UNIVERSITY

Dr. Eun-hui Eom
ASIA CENTER SEOUL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Dr. Jeong Gon Kim
KOREA INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICY

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11:50 - 12:05

Open Forum

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President
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New Southern Policy Plus: A Korean Perspective
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Professor
Korea National Diplomatic Academy

Review of New Southern Policy in the lens of the Philippines
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Professor
Stratbase ADR Institute for Strategic and International Studies

Dr. Aaron Jed Rabena
Research Fellow
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OPENING CEREMONY
GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE!

Good morning, everyone!

Magandang umaga po sainyong lahat! Ako po si Han Dong-man, Ambassador ng Korea sa Pilipinas. Ikinagagalak ko kayong makasama ngayon. Salamat sa inyong pagdalo! Una sa lahat, nais kong magpasalamat kay Atty. Danilo Concepcion, President of UP who will share his insight with us.

Thank you for inviting me, and it is my great honor and privilege to be here with all of you today. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the UP Korea Research Center for organizing this very meaningful event. And also my special thanks go to our keynote speaker, Professor Won-gi Choe, and many panelists. From Korean side also, I would like to express my thanks to Dr. Eom Eun-hui and also to Dr. Kim Jeong Gon for joining us.

The reason why today’s webinar is quite meaningful and fitting is that today marks the First Anniversary of the Korea-ASEAN Commemorative Summit held in Busan just last year, amid the year of the 10th anniversary of the strategic partnership between Korea and ASEAN.

Today, we are going to look into the newly-announced New Southern Policy Plus Strategy and to hear from many distinguished panels and the participants on how to implement it on the way forward, particularly, in the context of the Philippines. To be sure, the New Southern Policy (NSP) achieved a lot for the last three years, pillar by pillar.
Despite what the NSP has achieved so far, factors such as new policy demands arising from COVID-19 and emerging regional security environments require innovative thinking and approach. To respond actively to these challenges, President Moon Jae-in of Korea, while he remains committed to regional peace and prosperity, announced the New Southern Policy Plus Strategy during the recent 21st ASEAN-ROK Summit, of course this was welcomed by ASEAN leaders.

The NSP Plus Strategy lays out fresh, feasible initiatives centered on the seven key areas of cooperation, including comprehensive healthcare cooperation. Details will be introduced by my friend, Professor Choe Won-gi. So what I took note of is that ASEAN also launched the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework at the recent ASEAN-related Summit. Thus, it is my hope that Korea and the ASEAN could enjoy great co-prosperity by combining the five key areas proposed by ASEAN with the NSP Plus Strategy.

Now, Korea and ASEAN are in the same boat, to navigate a long journey to achieve co-prosperity. So let’s go together for our bright future based upon our solid friendship and partnership.

Sabay sabay nating tahakin para sa ating pagkakaibigan at samahan! Maraming salamat po. Mabuhay!
CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE
Atty. Danilo L. Concepcion
President
University of the Philippines

My heartfelt congratulations to the Embassy of the Republic of Korea; to Ambassador Dong-man Han, who has been such a good friend of UP; and to the UP Korea Research Center, for pulling through in these difficult times to organize this forum.

Congratulations as well to the webinar participants for crossing barriers of space and taking precious time and effort to share knowledge with this gathering.

As the head of the University, I am particularly happy to see the proactive role of people in the University in realizing a very worthwhile initiative.

As a Filipino, I appreciate the importance that the Korean government is giving our country and the region. We appreciate being part of a dynamic, responsive, and respectful friendship that sincerely looks out for the other one’s welfare, as manifested in President Moon Jae-in administration’s NSP.

Not only the NSP, for that matter, but in a track record of more than 30 years of ASEAN-ROK dialogue, the last 10 years of which consisted of a strategic partnership, which has borne enough fruit to inspire intensification. All these years, we have our countries witnessing and enjoying the benefits of growing trade, cultural and knowledge exchange, shared solutions and progress.

Indeed, this momentum should be reinforced and advanced.
The relevance of the NSP initiative is more felt today. How lucky we are to have good neighbors, creatively pushing further and reaching out despite, and in response to, new and unprecedented demands, over lockdowns and quarantines!

UP is proud to contribute to transforming this good-hearted enthusiasm—the best wishes of our Korean neighbor—into real benefits for ASEAN Plus.

Let me take this moment to thank the Embassy of the Republic of Korea for the opportunity for experts to come together and help. Thank you for believing in our local scholars and valuing their contribution in making this policy work for our respective countries.

And thank you to the UP KRC. UP is lucky to be the home of a KRC helping us fulfill our mandate to be the country’s regional and global university, to participate in international endeavors toward people-to-people connection, regional peace and co-prosperity.

The present may be set back by crippling problems but kind visions and future directions, as exemplified by the NSP Plus, are reminders of the bigger, more permanent pictures of our life as a community of nations.

And because of this, I only have the best wishes for this webinar.

*Mabuhay!*
SESSION I
KEYNOTE PRESENTATION AND REACTIONS
Dr. Won-gi Choe is a Professor and Head of Center for ASEAN–India Studies at the Korea National Diplomatic Academy (KNDA). He holds B.A. and M.A. in International Relations from Seoul National University in Korea and Ph.D. in Political Science from University of Washington at Seattle in the United States.

At KNDA he has been conducting policy-oriented research on such topics as Korea’s FTA policy, regional integration and regional architecture building in East Asia, G20 and global governance, and Korea’s approach toward UN climate change negotiation, etc.

He was an advisory member of ROK government delegation at the UNFCCC meetings and participated in the multilateral climate change negotiations from 2010 to 2019. He is currently a member of advisory group at the Presidential Committee on New Southern Policy in Korea.

As head of Center for ASEAN–India Studies at KNDA, he engages in policy research on such topics as New Southern Policy, which is Korea’s new foreign policy initiative toward Southeast Asia and beyond, regional cooperation and integration in East Asia, and geo-political dynamics and regional architecture in the Indo-Pacific.

New Southern Policy Plus: A Korean Perspective

ABSTRACT

The New Southern Policy (NSP) is President Moon Jae-in’s initiative to deepen the Republic of Korea (ROK)’s engagement with Southeast Asia and beyond. The primary motivation of the new ASEAN policy initiative is closely associated with Seoul’s new recognition that given the growing economic and strategic importance of ASEAN, ASEAN on its own right is now a force to be reckoned with in the ROK’s diplomatic priorities. The NSP is based on this reflection that it is imperative to fill this lacuna in Seoul’s perception on ASEAN by overcoming its past approaches that have often been criticized as transactional, inconsistent, and commercially-centered. The NSP currently stands for President Moon’s signature foreign policy initiative to advance the ROK-ASEAN relations to a whole new level; it encompasses diplomatic, economic, socio-cultural, as well as strategic dimensions. The NSP is now further upgraded as the NSP Plus reflecting the changing environment and priorities in the post-Covid19 era.

I want to first talk about the background of the NSP and its three pillars – the guiding principles of NSP, and some core policy elements. And then, I'll be talking briefly about NSP Plus which was announced two weeks ago as a new implementation strategy for the NSP initiative. And finally, I'd like to add a few words on the challenges and ways forward. Before getting into my presentation, the usual disclaimer applies here: I’m speaking in my individual capacity as a researcher and my presentation does not represent the position of the organization that I work for, KNDA, nor the official position of the government of Korea.

All right, I will start first with the background of New Southern Policy. First, I’d like to point out that in conventional Korean diplomatic practices, only the big four major countries, i.e., the U.S., China, Japan,
and Russia, are given priorities. ASEAN has largely remained secondary in Seoul’s foreign policy priorities in spite of its growing prominence and importance to Korea. You have some sort of anachronistic bias, or gap, between the reality of Korea as the 10th largest economy in the world, and its diplomatic orientation and practices. With the introduction of the New Southern Policy, we want to change this bias and imbalances in Korean diplomatic priorities.

With NSP, you want to diversify your diplomatic and economic relations beyond the big four major countries. So, I think diversification is the keyword in the NSP initiative. NSP currently stands for President Moon’s signature foreign policy initiative that includes all of the major policy fronts, including diplomatic, economic, socio-cultural, as well as strategic dimensions. As Ambassador Han already pointed out, it has been already three years since President Moon initiated this initiative. And looking back on the achievements and progress that we have made since the inception of New Southern Policy, I think NSP is the most successful, and the most active, policy program in the Moon administration as we could observe from the Commemorative Summit held in Busan last year. Actually, he has many other initiatives, but other initiatives have not delivered as much as New Southern Policy.

Now, let me start with the three pillars of NSP. These are the so-called three Ps that are the guiding principles of the NSP initiative. I like to briefly touch upon each of the three Ps.

First of all, the NSP is a People-centered initiative and President Moon gives a priority to expanding people-to-people exchanges. Here, what we mean by the people-to-people exchange is not simply about the mutual visits and contacts between ASEAN and Korea. It is more about deepening and strengthening human relations and the bilateral relationship between Korea and ASEAN at the people level. This aspect of NSP also has a strong resonance with the people-centered approach of the ASEAN community-building efforts. So, we aim for increasing people-to-people ties and solidarity. If you look at the actual policy programs of NSP, you have policy programs in the areas of cultural exchanges, education, training,
scholarship programs, and things like that. All of these programs are related to the concept of a people-centered approach embedded in the NSP. More than anything else, we want to expand and strengthen the human ties and solidarity with ASEAN. I think that is the philosophy behind NSP and this is the most important thing. So, with these human ties and people-to-people solidarity, you could start with other kinds of cooperation in economic and other areas as well.

I think the second principle of NSP is Prosperity. It’s basically about increasing and expanding trade and investment. The goal here is to expand economic exchanges and cooperation that would produce and deliver mutually beneficial economic outcomes. This is very important. We know that the Korean approach in the past was mostly commercially-oriented and focused on profit-seeking activities. We are very well-aware of these problems in the past and with the NSP initiative, we try to make efforts to overcome them. So, under the NSP, we encourage the private businesses to engage in economic activities that would not only meet the local demands and needs of the Southeast Asian partners but also deliver the results locally. The Korean government wants to play in this process as a facilitating role in creating positive incentives and making a business environment conducive for mutually beneficial economic cooperation. So many policy programs under the prosperity pillar of NSP are designed to help and enhance the ASEAN community-building efforts and to fill in the developmental gaps.

The third pillar is Peace, and this is about regional cooperation that would contribute to promoting peace and stability in the region. You know that Korea is not a major power that pursues strategic goals. Rather, Korea is a middle power that has limited resources and capabilities, so here the agenda we have is very modest, not so ambitious. In this respect, NSP is not a political agenda with strategic goals and ambitious intentions. By design, NSP does not have any hard security elements from the beginning. I think President Moon did not present NSP as Korea’s new security policy. Rather, NSP is more of Korea’s regional cooperation agenda with a set of functional cooperation programs. That is, from the beginning, Seoul wants to present NSP as a functional cooperation agenda to ASEAN, not as a strategic agenda with the security policy elements. In this respect, Korea wants to
play the role of a benign actor with practical cooperation agenda. In fact, in Southeast Asia, Korea is not usually regarded as a political actor like other major countries like China, United States, and Japan.

To many Southeast Asian people, Korea is more of a cultural phenomenon, popular and familiar being with K-dramas, K-pop songs such as BTS Dynamite, right? In that regard, I think under the Peace pillar of New Southern Policy, as I pointed out before, you cannot really find a hard security agenda. The focus under the peace pillar of NSP is non-traditional security cooperation. We want to pursue some cooperative projects in the areas like climate change, environmental degradations, for example, marine waste is a big problem in the Philippines and other Southeast Asian countries, and also water management in the Mekong area, wildfire management, and early warning for flooding and things like this. We want to kind of focus on these non-traditional security areas.

Now, I turn to the core policy elements of the New Southern Policy. I think at least we have four discernable core policy elements. The first one is the people-to-people ties which I already mentioned so I skip on this item. The other three are economic diversification, diplomatic rebalancing, and promoting regional cooperation.

Economic diversification. With this NSP initiative, I think Seoul wants to realign and expand its external economic portfolios with ASEAN, because Southeast Asia has the most dynamically growing economies in the world. So, we want to kind of realign and expand our ties and I think we have a lot of economic complementarities and ample potential in this regard. Also, NSP is a kind of economic diversification effort in that NSP is based on Korea’s strategic desire to reduce vulnerabilities and dependency, especially on China. You know that we had the bitter experience of economic retaliation by China right after the deployment of the THAAD missile battery in 2016. I think this instance served as a kind of wake-up call. And also, even before the NSP, the economic diversification out of China has been already occurring among many Korean private business firms operating in China. According to the Korean government sources, at one time in the past, more than 45,000 Korean firms were operating
their production facilities in China. Now, this number has been cut in half. According to government sources, we now have about 28,000 firms operating in China. So, there has been an exodus of Korean firms out of China and they have mostly relocated to Southeast Asia. Even before this NSP, economic diversification has been already occurring.

The second core policy element, as I pointed out before, is diplomatic rebalancing.

The aspiration here is that you want to elevate ASEAN as a priority partner, in your diplomatic priorities, orientations, and practices, on a par with the big four major powers. In this regard, NSP is a diplomatic rebalancing effort and you want to overcome the bias embedded in conventional Korean diplomatic orientations. I think we already have some institutional changes in this regard, for example, about two years ago, they created a whole brand-new bureau in the headquarters of the Foreign Ministry (MOFA) in Seoul which is dedicated solely to dealing with ASEAN and Southeast Asian affairs. So, we now have an independent “Bureau of ASEAN and Southeast Asian Affairs” in MOFA Korea. This is the first time in Korean diplomatic history. We also upgraded and expanded ‘Korean Diplomatic Mission to ASEAN’ in Jakarta. They tripled the number of Korean diplomats stationing in the ASEAN mission in Jakarta, so the ROK’s ASEAN mission is now one of the major, one of the largest, multilateral diplomatic missions abroad. I think these institutional reinforcements show that Korea is really serious about NSP and trying to give priority to ASEAN relations.

The third core policy element of NSP is regional cooperation. I think NSP is also Korea’s new policy for regional cooperation in East Asia and in the wider Indo-Pacific area in the context of increasing US-China strategic competition, I think NSP is also Korea’s hedging policy, so the concept of inclusiveness is central in Seoul’s regional cooperation strategy as we want an inclusive regional architecture to emerge in the Indo-Pacific region. In this regard, Korea under NSP is in full support of ASEAN’s AOIP (ASEAN Outlook in the Indo-Pacific) and I think Korea shares the same interest in this regard with ASEAN. We prefer to have some sort of open, transparent, and inclusive regional architecture based on the ASEAN-
led multilateral arrangements and mechanisms like the EAS (East Asian Summit). So, Korea has a convergence of interests with ASEAN and we try to come up with some sort of stronger cooperation with ASEAN in this regard.

Now, let me turn to the NSP Plus. Well, NSP Plus was announced two weeks ago by President Moon at the ASEAN-ROK Summit. I think NSP Plus is a new implementation strategy for the NSP initiative. Well, the detailed information about the contents of the NSP Plus is on the way, and the Korean government is preparing to provide detailed information soon. If you look at NSP Plus, the NSP Plus is composed of a set of custom-tailored policy programs reflecting the urgent need to deal with the challenges of COVID-19 as well as the shifts in the needs and the priorities of ROK-ASEAN relations. So, as a brand-new implementation strategy of the NSP initiative, NSP Plus has designated seven priority areas as Ambassador Han pointed out in the beginning. We came up with a set of clustered policy programs in each of these seven priority areas. You know that the policy programs under the NSP were originally designed way before the outbreak of the Coronavirus, so we didn't have any programs related to this. NSP Plus is designed and planned in such a way that it has a strong resonance with the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework and its implementation plan. If you look at the details of the policy programs under NSP Plus, the seven priorities overlap with the five broad strategies and priorities of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework.

I can’t go into detail about the NSP Plus but let me briefly touch upon the seven priorities of NSP Plus. Once again, I emphasize that NSP Plus is not a replacement of the original NSP initiative. I think NSP Plus is more of the implementation strategy for the original NSP initiative in the context of COVID-19 and recent changes in the environment.

The first priority of NSP Plus is public health cooperation. The most important and urgent task, for now, is to overcome the health crisis caused by COVID-19 for every country, right? But originally, public health cooperation was not the major component in the original NSP implementation program, so they adjusted, they coordinated, and they
changed the program. So now, public health cooperation is the number one priority in NSP Plus. Here we aim for comprehensive health cooperation. The first priority in NSP Plus is not just about simply supplying the health equipment and supplies. This is way bigger and larger and longer than that. So first, we are going to double the size of ODA funding devoted to the health cooperation program over the next five years. The health cooperation program is composed of very diverse and comprehensive policy measures, so this includes the provision of health care supplies and equipment. But also, this initiative has capacity-building programs for educating and nurturing health professionals. We also have the item of health industry cooperation. Also, we have knowledge sharing programs, consulting programs regarding health emergency response capabilities. There, the list is very long. We have a very diverse set of programs for expanding and strengthening public health cooperation.

The second priority is education and human capital development program. In the NSP, education is very important, and it represents the people-centeredness of the NSP, SO WE have very diverse education programs including scholarship programs, the invitation of college students, teachers, and professionals in various fields from ASEAN countries, and various vocational and technical training programs as well. We have a very extensive list of policy programs and measures regarding the education and human capital development program, so this is the second priority.

The third priority is cultural exchange. Even if people can't travel these days due to COVID-19, we are planning to utilize digital technology to create online platforms that allow virtual cultural exchanges. These are some of the examples of policy programs under the third priority of cultural exchanges.

The fourth priority is trade and investment. The programs under this include various policy measures regarding the reshaping of the global value chain (GVC) and also, the trade liberalization efforts like bilateral FTAs and CEPA agreements, and also small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) capacity building programs, and developmental assistance. So, a variety of programs try to promote trade and investment.
The sixth priority is the infrastructure development program. Here, we do not talk about a large-scale infrastructure development like the projects under China’s BRI initiative. I think we have two sets of models in mind here: One is a rural development project based on our own experience of rural development like the ‘Saemaul Undong’ initiative. So, we want to help develop rural areas in various parts of Southeast Asia. The other is about the smart city development. We have some experience in developing smart cities and we would like to share the experience and know-how of Korea’s smart city development. This is closely related to the MPAC (Master Plan ASEAN on Connectivity initiative).

The seventh priority area, as I mentioned before, is non-traditional security cooperation. Here we have some cooperation projects on the environmental issues: climate change, water management in the Mekong, biodiversity programs, marine waste management programs, and disaster management projects regarding the wildfire and early warning systems for flooding. As I pointed out before, I think they will release more detailed information on NSP Plus in the near future and its detailed implementation programs.

As a new implementation strategy to realize the goals of the NSP initiative, I hope NSP Plus would work effectively and consistently in the coming future. Now the last part of my presentation: challenges and ways forward.

First of all, I think we have strong pressure from the geopolitical tensions from the ongoing US-China strategic competition. We now have the new administration in the United States, the Biden administration. I think they will have no less hard approach to China than the Trump administration. So, in geostrategic respect, Korea is poised in the middle between the US and China and I guess we face greater pressure from this which would constrain our ability to pursue NSP initiatives. And some people criticize that NSP is focusing too much on the economic issues and we do not have a strong element in strategic and security cooperation areas.
I think that’s true. Again, according to my own perspective, I think that is so by design from the beginning. The NSP initiative is aiming for functional cooperation: we do not want to pursue strategic goals, and I think this reflects some of the limitations and constraints of Korea as a middle power.

Also, lots of people raise this question: “Will the NSP survive the Moon presidency?” “Do you expect that NSP will be remaining even after President Moon steps down?” I think my answer to this question is yes, maybe the brand name of this policy initiative might be changed later on because in Korea, every five years, you have a new president and new administration, and you have all new brand names for your major policy initiatives. This is the way politics is done in Korea because we have a single-term presidency. But I think even under a different brand name, we will continue to have NSP even after President Moon because it is in our interest to continue. NSP is not developed for the purpose of some altruistic perspective. I think this is also the best that serves Korea’s interest, so we do have some invested interests that NSP to continue. I’ll stop here and thank you very much for your attention.
SESSION I

DISCUSSION OF THE REVIEW OF NEW SOUTHERN POLICY IN THE LENS OF THE PHILIPPINES

Prof. Victor Andres C. Manhit
Stratbase ADR Institute for Strategic and International Studies

Prof. Victor Andres “Dindo” C. Manhit is the Founder and Managing Director of the Stratbase Group and President of its policy think-tank, Albert del Rosario Institute for Strategic and International Studies or ADRi.

Concurrently, he is Philippine Country Head of the renowned BowerGroupAsia (BGA), a strategic advisory firm that specializes in the Asia-Pacific. BGA applies unmatched experience and expertise to help its clients navigate the world’s most complex and dynamic markets.

He was a former Chair and retired Associate Professor of the Political Science Department of De La Salle University. He has authored numerous commentaries and papers on geopolitical issues, governance and political reforms.

He obtained his Master’s Degree in Public Administration and Bachelor’s Degree in Philippine Studies (major in Political Science and History) from the University of the Philippines. A member of Phi Gamma Mu International Honors’ Society Beta Chapter, he specializes in Strategic Studies and Management, Legislative Research, and Public Policy Analysis.

Moreover, he was appointed as one of the ASEAN Regional Forum Experts and Eminent Persons (ARF EEPs) by the Department of Foreign Affairs.
The impact of COVID-19 varies from country to country and no country can let its guard down. And, when President Moon spoke of a strategy that we will be able to take the lead in the post-COVID-19 era and realized a vision where a people-centered community of peace and prosperity foster. I wanted to use this as a take-off point.

This reminded me of the three pillars of the New Southern Policy that I took note of last year in a couple of visits and discussions with KNDA and I feel it remains relevant and timely given the continuing impact of COVID-19. The shifts economically and politically that have drastically altered the field calls for middle powers like Korea to shape where the next trends are headed. And this Republic of Korea’s regional policy direction built on the interest and welfare of the people driven by the goal of economic prosperity through mutually beneficial long-term gains and towards strategic cooperation for regional peace’s ability through diplomatic rebalancing is so appropriate for our time, but when you look at regional recover, listening to Dr. Won-gi reading through the NSP Plus strategy, it addresses the challenge of the region and more so the Philippines.

**ABSTRACT**

The nexus of the 21st century global order is in the Indo-Pacific region influenced by the emerging role of middle powers. At a time of recovery from a pandemic and of great power politicking, states must effectively utilize a whole-of-society approach in the national-level, and strengthen strategic cooperation with like-minded states in order to mitigate risks from uncertainties in the economic and security aspect and maximize opportunities presented by the region’s inherent multipolarity.

The New Southern Policy Plus Strategy of President Moon Jae-in comes at a crucial time, both in the post-pandemic recovery and resilience, and in the time of converging minilateral strategies. Through the cooperative engagement of middle powers in the Indo-Pacific, a robust regional order will emerge centered on its people and common vision of peace and prosperity.
When I read the NSP Plus strategy, I take note of health and medical cooperation, education and human resource development, cultural exchanges, mutually beneficial trade relations investments, infrastructure from rural farming urban, even future industries cooperation, even on issues of non-conventional security cooperation. This expansion of this strategy is so appropriate to the challenge that the country is facing right now. In Stratbase ADR Institute, we have been tracking to our research and intelligence team what we call eight pandemic risks.

True, there is this nature of creative destruction, but you can turn risk into opportunity, and I would like to take note of a commentary that I wrote on the eve of the fifth State of the Nation Address of the President where I spoke of public health and economy in the balance. I wrote that managing the crisis at the national level depends on the country’s capacity to respond and control the virus. until such time a cure or a vaccine has been developed, we need to plan and strategize on how to cope with this new normal. And then until now, I keep on arguing for the need to work in unison with different stakeholders. And what I mean by stakeholders, not only referring to the Philippines, private sector, public sector, civil society, academy but even neighbors within the region. In our September policy brief, I wrote that to bounce back more quickly the country needs to recalibrate its growth trajectory by veering away from its long reliance on traditional growth drivers especially consumer spending. It is time for the Philippine government to redesign its core strategy and develop effective policies for long-term and inclusive economic recovery and growth by taking focus on stable foreign investors. When I was writing this policy brief, one of the policies that I had in mind is a New Southern Policy without realizing there will be a New Southern Policy Plus because I’ve argued that as government needs to calibrate the national strategy for the economy or this need for an investment drive growth. It is imperative to enhance the Philippines’ potential role in an increasingly changing global supply chain and benefit from the manufacturing exodus from China. Our situation presents itself as an opportunity for the Philippines to attract the right foreign investors. I believe the country has a competitive advantage in terms of its strategic location, a young and skilled workforce, especially in manufacturing that can really strengthen our role in the global supply chain.
I’ve seen to my engagement with our own Department of Trade and Industry, how investors in their own special economic zones played an important role during especially the lockdown since March of ensuring that the supply chain will not affect critical industries. I took note of some ICT or information technology corporations that had some of their components being built in different economic zones in the Philippines. That means we can produce more exports than imports that can lead to great service and this is what I speak of with regards to calibrating the national strategy for recovery. I take note of all these companies currently in the Philippines, in the Philippines’ special economic zones. Of course, the government needs to simply supplement this further by easing the cost of doing business as the current pandemic accelerates technological change to automation. We need the Philippines to transform digitally to become globally competitive while numerous factors hinder the country from swiftly recovering most of which are political in nature.

Private enterprises both domestic and more so, foreign enterprises can take the lead and show the directional focus for a more sustainable economic growth in the Philippines. While I take note of this, I also continue to emphasize the importance of a friend like the Republic of Korea plays within the regional security environment. In Stratbase ADR Institute, we have tried to track these issues along with the traditional security challenges, or even now especially with this pandemic, non-traditional security environment, and even evolving security challenges. As we track these, I wanted to share what we wrote in our November policy brief and this is where I believe the Republic of Korea within the Philippines and within the region can play a role provided middle power countries should realize that even if the United States presence in the Indo-Pacific is crucial to ensure a rule-based order, our region’s future should not be dictated by or chartered under a unipolar hegemony. As the region’s political landscape continues to evolve, there’s a crucial need for the middle powers to recognize their role at the importance of creating a network of like-minded states built on the shared values of democracy, built on the belief of a rule-based order to protect and maintain an open and multi-polar Indo-Pacific region. That’s why I speak here of maximizing minilateralism. I see opportunities in the convergence of interest between the Philippines and the Republic of Korea’s NSP Plus
strategy. The region’s ability to function within a broader global system despite the difference in culture and varying levels of development is evident that despite growing uncertainties and disruptions in Indo-Pacific has the ability to try and shape the regional order in line with its own interests. The convergence of Indo-Pacific strategies and common interests emphasizes that through collective leadership, middle powers could maximize their role amidst a changing geopolitical environment, and a stronger Philippines-Republic of Korea relations beyond this US-China strategic competition, beyond COVID-19, is what we all mean. The broader regional context from an ASEAN lens particularly in the Philippines possesses relative to the US-China and other middle power to highlight its non-threatening posture and its capacity to navigate through the hierarchical nature of global affairs.

Beyond great power politicking and COVID-19, well-established relations between the Philippines and South Korea across political, social, cultural, and economic engagements provide various platforms and opportunities to enable new areas of cooperation to sustain and elevate existing mechanisms. I want to end with a line from a commentary that I wrote with the Philippine Daily Inquirer two weeks back - two Fridays back - if remember it right. The current global disorder with the rise of evolving security threats in both traditional and non-traditional spaces demands in the region utilize effective minilateral collaborations among strategic partners and allies - and here refers to the Republic of Korea, and ASEAN-Republic of Korea, and the Republic of the Philippines. Again, good morning and thank you for this opportunity!
SESSION I
DISCUSSION OF THE REVIEW OF NEW SOUTHERN POLICY IN THE LENS OF THE PHILIPPINES

Dr. Aaron Jed Rabena
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Dr. Aaron Jed Rabena is Research Fellow at the Asia-Pacific Pathways to Progress (a Manila-based foreign policy think tank), Consultant at Caucus Incorporated (a business and government relations consulting firm), and a member of the Philippine Council for Foreign Relations (PCFR). He previously served as Senior Lecturer at the Asian Center in the University of the Philippines and Visiting Fellow at the China Institute of International Studies (CIIS) and China Foreign Affairs University (CFAU). He is also a Pacific Forum Young Leader and is an alumnus of the East-West Center (EWC) and the US State Department’s International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). He received his PhD in International Relations from Shandong University in China. His areas of interest include Strategic Studies, East Asian Geopolitics and Multilateral Politics, Political Risk, and Chinese Politics and Foreign Policy. He was selected as one of the ASEAN-Korea Next Generation Policy Experts of the Korea Foundation in 2018.
ABSTRACT

The state and gains of South Korea’s New Southern Policy (NSP) in the Philippines will be examined through the developments in its three major pillars, namely, prosperity (economy), peace (security/defense) and people (society and culture). Following this, policy prescriptions will be offered that can contribute to a rebranded NSP in the form of the NSP-Plus.

For this morning, I’d like to talk about the gain and prospects of Korea’s New Southern Policy in the Philippines and also, in relation to the presentation of Professor Choe about the NSP Plus. So, I’d start by number one, I’ll discuss the state of the NSP in the Philippines in terms of the Prosperity aspect. Second is the NSP in the Philippines in terms of Security. And third, the NSP in the Philippines in terms of the socio-cultural dimension. And fourth would be some policy prescriptions as to how the NSP Plus can further the Philippines’ development and economic agenda.

Just some background, we can notice the impact of the NSP in the Philippines given the frequency and the interaction in terms of the interaction at the highest levels. For example, in 2017, President Moon met with President Duterte. In 2018, they met in Seoul, and in 2019 again in Busan. So, we go to the first aspect of the NSP in terms of prosperity.

What has happened here in 2017 – I used 2017 here as the benchmark because I believe the NSP was announced in 2017, so by looking at the years 2018 and 2019, we can see the progress of what has been achieved. In terms of 2017, our trade with South Korea was at 13 billion dollars. They were our fourth-largest trade partner, fifth-largest export market, and fourth-largest import source. In 2018, the trade volume was still at 13 billion. South Korea was again our fourth-largest trade partner. This time, they became the sixth-largest export market and second-largest import source. But come 2019, the trade volume slightly declined to 11.7 billion dollars and South Korea became the fifth largest trade partner, sixth-largest export market, and third-largest import source, so in terms of investments,
I'm referring to actual investments here. South Korea was the 11th largest in 2017 and they became the ninth largest, so we see the progress here. They became the ninth-largest in 2018. In 2019, They became the third-largest investment source – 142 million dollars. As to ODA in 2017, South Korea was the sixth-largest. In 2018, they became the fifth largest and in 2019, they became the fourth largest ODA source - 630 million dollars. I guess we can attribute this to the Moon government’s kind of priority that they attach to the NSP and at the same time, we have to keep in mind that the bilateral FTA between the Philippines and Korea is still in the works. probably by next year, it will already be finalized and so this will certainly prop up the bilateral trade between the Philippines and South Korea. And also, notably, recently RCEP has just been signed so this would also I guess impact the trade between the two countries. So, in terms of security, I guess just some trivia here. We all know that the Philippines sent troops to help South Korea to defend itself against North Korea, and it’s actually in the Korean war where the Philippines had an indirect battle against Chinese troops. It is in the Battle of Yultong actually where the Philippines were able to defeat the Chinese. In relation to this, given that historically Philippines–Korea relationship is one of the blood alliances, we can see that we can consider South Korea therefore as a traditional security partner or capacity builder.

I think even before the New Southern Policy was announced, South Korea was already looking south because it was already helping beef up the Philippines’ defense capabilities. We see this in the acquisition of fighter jets, and we will also see this in the procurement of multi-role guided-missile frigates, and I think the Philippines plans to get two more from South Korea so South Korea also donated a Pohang class corvette, and it is believed that two more will be coming. So, the generosity of South Korea in this regard is really appreciated in the Philippines. More recently in terms of military ties, the Philippines and South Korean navies discussed COVID-19 cooperation virtually, and the Department of National Defense of the Philippines also plans to get surplus choppers from South Korea. We can see that the security ties between the Philippines and South Korea really continues to deepen.
In terms of people, I believe tourist spots in the Philippines are favorites of South Koreans. For example, in 2017, we can see here the year the NSP was announced South Korean visitors to the Philippines were figured at 1.6 million. In 2018, they’re still the number one source 1.5 million. Suddenly declined, but then in 2019, it became 1.9 million so still number one. And as positive news for many Filipinos especially for those fans of K-pop and K-drama, South Korea decided to relax visa requirements for Filipinos, and this would certainly entice more Filipinos to go to South Korea for tourism, studies, and among other things. We have also seen the launching of the Philippine-South Korea society, so this is a good platform for promoting business and people-to-people relations between the two countries.

As to my policy considerations in light of the announcement of the NSP, I think that in addition to supporting the Duterte government’s ‘Build Build Build’ program, the ROK should also target the Philippines’ investment priorities plan because as the name says, this is the investment priorities of the government and I think that this is what we badly need right now. You know, climate-resilient infrastructure considering that the Philippines is situated in the Pacific Ring of Fire. You can see the devastation that was brought about by Typhoon Rolly and Ulysses here in my country, we need to fix our infrastructure, so we need help from foreign friends. South Korea I think should also engage in the sub-regional grouping of BIMP-EAGA. It’s like the Mekong version – the Mekong region counterpart of maritime ASEAN: Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. One of the plans of BIMP-EAGA is to have this ASEAN RORO shipping network. But of course, it’s not that easy because certain areas of BIMP-EAGA are prone to security threats like terrorism, and piracy, so this is also where I think South Korea can help in terms of the Peace aspect of the NSP. There can be bilateral maritime patrols in the Sulu Sea. This has already been done by the Philippines with Malaysia and Indonesia so why not South Korea? President Duterte even mentioned that it can be done with Japan and China, so why not South Korea? With this, I think South Korea can be seen as a public goods provider in maritime Southeast Asia, and I also think that there can be a regularized military exercises, for example,
in counterterrorism between the Philippines and South Korea. Similarly, I think there can also be coast guard exercises in the Philippines and South Korea.

For the People aspect, I think it’s important to deepen think tank and university diplomacy, for example, research collaboration, and joint publications. I, for one, would love to do projects with Professor Choe in the future, so I think it’s important to intensify think tank interactions, joint activities, and visiting fellowships as well so that Filipinos can be exposed to South Korea’s strategic political culture, and South Koreans can also be exposed to Philippine political-strategic culture. As for others not related to peace, people, and prosperity, this was already mentioned in the Health pillar. This is similar to China’s Belt and Road Initiative. They have the health Silk Road and I think we should do more than just vaccines and mask diplomacy because, in the Philippines, COVID-19 showed that there are a few Filipinos who were trained in Q-PCR machines, medical technology, applied molecular biology, and molecular medicine. So, we need training, and I think South Korea as a developed country can really help us with this. I think it’s high time that the Philippines and South Korea lift the bilateral ties to strategic partnership just as it has done with Indonesia and Vietnam. We need to connect the partnerships in the region.

I think this is just for consideration but there can be new mechanisms like 2+2 meetings. We have 2+2 meetings with the United States, and I think also with Japan. And there can also be a website for the NSP Plus. China’s Belt and Road Initiative, they have a website for the BRI. That’s where all activities were published. And if not a website, there can also be an annual publication of reports about the NSP. This is what the United States State Department does in the Department of Defense. They publish annual reports about the Indo-Pacific. I think lastly ROK and ASEAN countries’ regional strategies must be coordinated. In relation to that, I think small and middle powers should be strategic and geopolitical agents. During the Cold War, we have seen the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. There was the non-aligned movement, the
global south countries in particular, where they banded together to reject imperialism and colonialism. I think this time given what some people say, “New Cold War”, you can call it “semi-cold war” strategic rivalry between the United States and China, there can be an aligned network of third-party states meaning a network of small immediate powers. This was already done when the United States opted out of the trans-pacific partnership. Japanese Prime Minister Abe stepped up and revived the CPTPP (Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership), so it shows that things can be done even without the United States. There can also be the coordination of the NSP with India’s Act East policy, Indonesia’s Global Maritime Fulcrum, the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) strategies of Japan and Australia.
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ABSTRACT

The New Southern Policy Plus (NSP Plus) is a new policy paradigm introduced by President Moon Jae-in that aims to deepen South Korea’s socio-cultural, economic, and political relations with countries of ASEAN and India. It is based on the so-called 3Ps: People, Prosperity, and Peace. The targets are ambitious and commendable but there are gray areas in the strategic tasks that need to be spelt out. Specific of which are a focus on cultural exchanges (cultural ODA), rural development (Saemaul), and environment (environmental ODA).

When I think of NSP, the New Southern Policy of Korea, as Korea’s initiative of knowing the ASEAN region and ASEAN peoples on a deeper level. As we all know, President Moon’s NSP Plus centers on the 3Ps: People, Prosperity, and Peace. But of the three, I am going to focus on the People Aspect particularly Policy Tasks numbers 2 and 6 which tackle cultural exchanges, rural development, and the environment.

So, the first one is Policy Task no. 2: “Expanding two-way cultural exchanges with NSP target countries.” The policy states that “we will promote two-way cultural exchanges by increasing the number of bases for cultural exchanges in the NSP target countries, implementing cultural ODA projects and spreading ASEAN cultures and relevant language contents.”

To me, here lie some gray areas. The first of which is the concept of cultural ODA. This is a very interesting concept as this can be President Moon’s one unique mark or say, contribution, like Lee Myung-bak’s Green Growth versus Brown Growth. This can be a new approach in reaching out to the peoples of ASEAN. But what does this concept really mean? Cultural ODA? Does it mean development assistance to promote Korean culture to Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian culture to Koreans? And if so, which particular cultural projects does this policy refer to?
Another vague area that I’ve noticed in the NSP is on the point of: “Promoting Korean people’s awareness and understanding of ASEAN cultures.” How can this policy be concretely carried out and achieved? A study by the ASEAN-Korea Center on Koreans’ perception towards ASEAN in 2018 revealed a limited and stereotyped image of ASEAN as an underdeveloped region and ASEAN peoples as generally foreign workers and marriage migrants in Korea. Perceptions such as these are hard to change. Increasing the number of Korean tourists to ASEAN is a logical approach but a deeper understanding of ASEAN on the part of Koreans is needed. Perhaps it’s high time that Southeast Studies in major universities in Korea needs to be established. This field should be approached comprehensively by taking into account the socio-political, economic, and cultural aspects of ASEAN countries.

The second task I would like to talk about is policy task no. 6: “Improving the quality of life of NSP target countries.” Specifically, it states that “We will also carry out rural development projects such as the Saemaul Undong Movement to alleviate poverty and foster the self-reliance capacity of the NSP target countries and strengthen the capacity to respond to diseases through enhanced development and cooperation in the field of health care.” We all know that Saemaul Undong as a rural development project is well-known globally. However, I observe that in the Philippines, Saemaul has not really made a huge impression in the country even though it was introduced here back in the 1990s. I understand that it is generally focused on short-term livelihood projects. It is important but what is equally important to me is that Saemaul should also focus on socio-culturally empowering the village leaders and the people through capacity training/workshops just like what Park did in the 1970s.

Another point I would like to raise is related to Policy No. 6 specifically on “Enhancing capacity for addressing environmental and health challenges.” In this regard, I’ll focus on environmental challenges. Looking into the NSP policy, what comes to mind in this aspect to me is the Environmental aid (Green ODA) started by former Pres. Lee Myung-bak in 2008 with a specific focus on climate change-related development finance of Korea. In my own study of comparing Korea’s projects on climate
change-related development finance of former presidents Lee Myung-bak, Park Geun Hye, and now President Moon, former president Lee Myung-bak had initiated many projects in the Philippines. This can be partly attributed to his ‘green growth vs brown growth’ paradigm. However, I observed that his projects were generally on environmental protection, while former president Park Geun Hye’s were on agriculture and fishing. Meanwhile, I’ve noticed that President Moon has focused on disaster risk reduction and management and environmental education/training. Of the three, President Moon’s approach is timely-responsive and has a huge potential to contribute further to environmental protection and care.

For me, the bottom-line of all these is that, if these three issues are really taken seriously, President Moon’s NSP has a huge potential to effect positive change in many aspects of ASEAN-Korea relations. With deeper cultural exchanges, genuine rural development, and environmental ODA focused on environmental education/training, NSP, I believe, can leave a lasting and meaningful impact on the lives of the ASEAN and Korean people even after President Moon’s term concludes in 2022. It is because his policy, the NSP, goes beyond high-level meetings. It touches on the very needs of the so-called ‘common man.’ Thank you so much for this opportunity and good morning again to everyone!
SESSION II
ROUNDTABLE ON PROSPECTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW SOUTHERN POLICY PLUS
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Andrew Yeo is Professor of Politics and Director of Asian Studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington DC. He is currently based in Manila as a Visiting Research Scholar at the University of the Philippines-Diliman. His recent books include *Asia’s Regional Architecture: Alliances and Institutions in the Pacific Century*, and *North Korean Human Rights: Activists and Networks*. Dr. Yeo’s research and teaching interests include international relations theory, East Asian regionalism, Asian security, US grand strategy, civil society, Korean politics, and North Korea. His current research includes a Korea Foundation supported study on areas of potential convergence between South Korea’s New Southern Policy and the US-ROK alliance. He has appeared or been quoted in a variety of media outlets including MSNBC, Channel News Asia, CBS, Voice of America, RTHK-Hong Kong, Foreign Affairs, Global Asia, The New York Times Magazine, South China Morning Post, Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Post. He received his Ph.D. in Government from Cornell University.
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He was a program officer of the ASEAN-Korea Centre handling external relations and the programs and activities for ASEAN-Korea youth from 2010 to 2015. He also served as Program Head of the Department of International Studies of Far Eastern University from 2015 to 2018. He is teaching courses on International and Regional Organizations, International Relations, Government and Politics of East Asia, and Introduction to International Relations. His interests include ASEAN affairs, ASEAN-Korea relations, East Asian International Relations, and Human Security.
Dr. Eunhui Eom is a geographer specializing in Southeast Asian studies. She acquired her Ph.D. in Geography from Seoul National University (SNU). She currently leads a research team for studying emerging markets in SEA at SNU funded by the Ministry of Education. Also, she serves as a national secretariat of the Future Earth Korea Committee. Eom has published various articles and joint book chapters on Southeast Asian issues including Korean expats in the Philippines and Indonesia, ASEAN smart cities, palm oil controversy, hydro-development in Mekong which have been features in various academic journals including The Southeast Asian Review, Asia Review, The Journal of Korea Geography, etc. (in Korean).
Dr. Jeong Gon Kim is now the head of India and South Asia team, Korea Institute for International Economic Policy (KIEP). From 2004 to 2017, he served in the Trade and Investment Policy Division and the Asia-Pacific Research Division of KIEP. From March 2017 to January 2019, he worked at the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA).

His research topics are South and Southeast Asian economy and digital economy. Recently he published policy reports such as The Digital Economy in ASEAN and India: Policy Implications for Korea, Issues of International Digital Trade and Their Policy Implications, etc. He earned Best Policy Report Award of KIEP in 2015 and 2016, and Best Academic Paper Award from Korea Trade Research Association in 2012.
LUMAMPAO: Welcome to the second session, everyone! I’m Raisa and I will be your moderator for the second session. In this session, we will listen to five panel members and their thoughts on the different strategies or policy areas of the NSP Plus. Our discussion for the second session will cover the strategic initiatives or priority areas of the NSP Plus and our panelists can share with us prospects and recommendations. To start off, this question is addressed to all five panelists:

**How do you think NSP Plus’ strategic initiatives or policy areas will strengthen or contribute to the NSP’s three pillars: peace, prosperity, and people?**

KIM: Yes. I think, first, in terms of economic perspective, traditionally Korea has strong economic ties with the United States, Japan, China, and Europe. And during 2000, Korea’s trade with the United States and Japan gradually decreased, and China became Korea’s largest trading partner, and ASEAN emerged as Korea’s new market and production base. Since 2000, Korea actively signed the FTA and Korea has signed updates with the United States, China, EU, ASEAN, individual Asian countries, and India, so to sum up, it is safe to say that traditional Korean trade policy is focused upon expanding overseas market from the viewpoint of Korea. However, there has been a growing perception that Korea has limitations in carrying out foreign economic policies. The WTO system has faced a crisis and there is a perception in Korea that Korea needs to look for deeper economic ties surpassing conventional forms of FTA, so the need for Korea’s foreign economic policies to take a new step has increased. In this regard, the NSP is Korea’s new regional policy. It aims to seek a new level of relationship with ASEAN and India which has a high potential for mutual cooperation. The NSP has three major orientations as you know – three Ps: prosperity, people, and peace – and those three Ps highlight a comprehensive and reciprocal partnership with ASEAN and India. In my opinion, economic ties should be interpreted in such a comprehensive region so NSP has, in other words, NSP has a long-term vision of Korea moving away from a one-way perspective and creating a reciprocal economic relationship with ASEAN and India.
Let me add why I stress this mutual relationship or reciprocal relationship. Despite the previous one which I will just call the previous NSP. Despite the philosophy of co-prosperity, it has been pointed out that in both in Korea and abroad, ASEAN and India, Korea’s perspective is still somewhat centered upon Korea’s viewpoint. There were also some opinions that the policy framework of NSP was not so well defined, so in this regard, the Korean government tried to improve NSP, and more importantly, the global environment has been changing dramatically. Not only it is clear that the global trade order is changing, but it is also expected that COVID-19 will have a profound impact on world politics, economy, and society. So again, this backdrop of a mutually beneficial relationship is more important for Korea’s policymakers, also for NSP countries. This is the background of the NSP Plus and why we have to focus on the new nature of NSP. Thank you.

**YEO:** I’ll try to be brief but in terms of the question of how does the NSP Plus enhances the three pillars, I would just say with the prosperity and the people pillar, they continue what they were doing before. Korea-ASEAN trade was moving in an upward direction in terms of investments and trade initiatives. Of course, COVID-19 has probably put a big dip into any volume of investment and trade. But before COVID-19, Korea-ASEAN economic relations were moving in the right direction. Same with the people pillar. But the one area of concern that I’m going to harp on again is the peace pillar. There was more expectation that in the NSP Plus or NSP 2.0, that there would be a bigger push to boost cooperation on the strategic front, but as Dr. Choe and the others have pointed out, the focus still seems to be on functional areas. Of course, on non-traditional security, the focus on public health is a really important one and something that I would praise the South Korean government for doing given the situation on the ground changing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Public health has been the biggest issue and so at least on that front on non-traditional security issues, we see forward movement regarding the peace pillar for South Korea, ASEAN, and South Korea-Philippine cooperation.

**YSLA:** I think it’s important to note that NSP Plus was not created out of nothing, so the policy was created out of a 30-year partnership and strong ties between Korea and the ten ASEAN member states so NSP Plus will
further amplify the actions that need to be done to maintain the dynamic strategic partnership between ASEAN and Korea. Korea as a middle power knows its position in the region as mentioned by our previous speakers. It surely will not pose a competition among major powers like China and Japan, but it can certainly connect with ASEAN countries without any reservation from the 10 member states. In order to optimize the relations between the member states of ASEAN and possibly India, Korea should focus its attention on the details of its action plan from 2021 to 2025 using its own advantage perhaps, you know, its knowledge in infrastructure, technology, so on and so forth. So, I think in that regard, NSP Plus would be able to further strengthen and contribute to the principles of peace, prosperity, and people.

EOM: I prepared the two things to speak for today. One is the big or overall, and the one is a little bit small, but yeah firstly, I want to mention the NSP Plus. Frankly speaking, the official policy document on NSP Plus did not open to the public even in Korea so I couldn’t have looked clouded on the details of the seven initiatives, except the main titles, but in my thought, the specific contents and implementation project of NSP Plus are of course important. There are other points I consider important. Korea’s NSP or NSP Plus policy should be continued without stopping or major changes in the next government because, from the next year in Korea, important elections are scheduled one after another despite a year and around six months away from the presidential elections. I just imagine the possibility of the presidential power changes occurring in the next election. Even so, I hope the NSP or NSP Plus will be continued there without major changes because I think this kind of Korea-ASEAN or Korea-Philippines relationship up to now is progressing. I think that our relationship is underway for progress. In my role as the regional expert, I will make more efforts that are important to diplomatic efforts such as the NSP are not neglected due to the domestic political events here in Korea, so it is my duty, I think. And then, I will go back to today’s topics. Actually, I prepared the comments on the culture exchange – Hallyu, cultural exchange. I would like to talk about the global popularity of Hallyu that cannot be explained only by the superiority of the Korean cultural industry. The acceptance of the local community and the voluntary participation of people is quite important in other words. The
Hallyu is not an achievement only in the Korean industry, but a result that has been made with the ASEAN audience together. In particular, I believe that the Philippines, Filipinos are having good English language skills, so the Philippines has contributed greatly to the global spread of the Korean neighbor. I think that Agi Sangeo or ‘Baby Shark’ is the greatest example. I heard that this song was able to spread thanks to the Filipino overseas workers around the world in childcare, but this information is still not well known in Korean society so I will try to make it that our peoples will get to know as soon as I get the chance.

And finally, one more thing, in terms of cultural exchange, I would like to make a special mention on the publication of the translation book by Professor Bae Kyung-min who recently organized this seminar. Firstly, congratulations to Professor Bae and the title in Korean is 나는 나로 살기로 했다, or in English “I decided to live as me.” Anyway, because my job is as a researcher, I believe that books are still important to cultural media for distributing knowledge and information. How about the situation of the book market in the Philippines? Whenever I go to the Philippines, I try to visit the bookstores, but I feel that the publishing industry is quite poor. Social science books I needed as a researcher can only be obtained in the press office of UP or the Ateneo University, but how about the popular books when I visited the general bookstores, for example, National Bookstore? To be honest, it is quite too disappointing. It seems that this place is actually the stationary, not bookstore so, in this regard, I hope the publication of Professor Bae’s translation will be an important opportunity for new cultural exchange between Korea and the Philippines. Actually, the young people in their 20s to 30s, especially young women, love these books, so I know that the Philippine book market tries to raise this kind of book area. I hope that Professor Bae and UP KRC will continue to introduce Korean literature and essays to Philippine society. For them, I think there is a good idea to promote the translation course specialized in Korean books at UP KRC level, but how do you think about these ideas? Of course, considering the mutuality of cultural exchanges I hope to read the books that could show the current Philippine society situation or hope or real livelihood in both countries, of the Philippines, and for the future. This is the end of my panel discussion.
How do you think academic and cultural exchanges can reduce or eliminate public perception between Koreans and ASEAN nationals due to economic disparities? Is there a way for cultural and economic exchanges to address this?

CRUZ: I just want to draw a point that was made earlier by Dr. Eom related to this particular issue. What I like about the NSP Plus is that it gives structure to NSP that it’s no longer something that can be vague and ambiguous like people, and prosperity because, of course, when you say people and prosperity, you ask: How do we get there? What are the policy actions that have to be taken? And I do believe that all of the new seven points are quite related and this includes policies that will, later on, improve public perception. For example, I do think that one of the great disparities between Korean education perhaps or the educational setting of Korea and the Philippines is connectivity, and now that we are in the situation of a pandemic, everything is online in the Philippines, and we know that we don’t have very good telecommunications structure. I do think this is an area where South Korea can come in, show best practices, develop telecommunications infrastructure and literacy because I do think, in terms of culture, this is a way to move forward in the era of fake news. In the era where everyone’s on social media, I do think this is a productive and relevant area of educational and policy concentration that can possibly be looked at.

This is also related, I think, to many other facets of development because I think one of the bases of public perception is really inequality, and that is in the SDGs. So, if there’s any way we can go forward with the NSP, I do think that they have to align with some of the sustainable development goals of the UN because they have benchmarks. So earlier we mentioned KPIs and I think that is in general an issue with the NSP. Last year, I was in Malaysia and we had a bit of talk about the New Southern Policy, and one of the things was – this was mentioned earlier – benchmarks. We need continuity because, of course, the Philippines or any other developing country for that matter does not have a say in whether or not this gets to be continued. That’s on the onus of the South Korean government, and if you do continue the NSP, what are the benchmarks? How do you know that you have been
improving? And I think one way is that if there is a reluctance to assert benchmarks because of domestic politics or whatsoever or because maybe of some kind of difficult your ASEAN way or whatever it is. I do think that it’s good to kind of link them to SDGs because then at least, there will be some kind of measurement as to whether or not we’re achieving anything, whether or not there is continuity, whether or not this policy or this set of policies are going anywhere. I also hope that moving forward, I think that these cultural perceptions take a long time to change because they’re based on economic inequalities and realities, right? If you look at things like Green Growth, and I hope that this initiative continues despite it coming from earlier administrations because it’s linked to COVID. I really think that all these problems are linked that you have coveted because of intrusions into wildlife. If you protect wildlife and if you ensure food security in a sustainable manner, this will have an impact on health so planetary health I think is a good sort of pitch diplomacy thing that can work.

It will also help I think, in terms of tourism, perhaps there are ecotourism policy matters that can be addressed by that. That will help to improve and help us understand cultural relations right and understanding where each country is coming from because you get to see first-hand environmental diversity and also the destruction that comes with excessive industry and the lack of monitoring in that regard, so I do think that public perception can be changed slowly but it can’t be changed within one administration. I think it’s linked to all the other policies present in the NSP and how you can tie them up to sustainable development goals.

**YSLA:** Honestly, the question is a tough one to answer, but you know with your indulgence, please allow me to share some of my observations. First, there are many existing academic and cultural exchanges between ASEAN and Korea. Second, many ASEAN students or even government officials benefitted from several exchange programs. Third, Korea maintains a good favorable image in ASEAN thanks to the Korean wave or Hallyu. In Korea, there’s ASEAN-Korea Center and the organization has implemented several programs that help in enhancing ASEAN awareness and this caters to young and older generations of Koreans, but we’re no longer talking about an awareness. We’re talking about how do we deepen understanding?
The first one I think is number one, further enhance the network of ASEAN students who studied in Korea and create regular programs for them, and I understand that some Korean embassies are already starting this kind of program for those who studied in Korea but as mentioned by previous speakers, there should be consistency in this regard. Second, there should be more young generations of Koreans that will have cultural exchanges in ASEAN. They should be encouraged to have maybe one-semester exchange in Southeast Asia because there’s more to learn aside from the touristic features of Southeast Asia, so I think we should go beyond that idea. Because right now, Korea is one of the major tourists in or to visitors in Southeast Asia, but there seemed to be a disconnect in terms of the number of Koreans coming to Southeast Asia and the deepening of understanding of the Korean society as regards Southeast Asian nations. I think perhaps all the local government units in South Korea also have their engagement with the cultural activities being organized by organizations such as the ASEAN-Korea Center because the reach is quite limited in one year. There could be only like few programs or there are several programs but it’s confined to several areas like Seoul or Busan so there should be a consolidated effort not just from the national government, but also the local government when you talk about cultural activities by these organizations because this is where the funds go, right? and the funding should be well appropriated in this particular course.

And lastly, can I just add one more? We should be able to address the gaps or insufficiency of information about ASEAN countries given to Korean students. There’s a news article that was published in December 2019 citing the limited and improper teaching of Southeast Asian history in Korea so there’s a need for us to basically make some reforms or at least add new programs that would somehow further enhance the knowledge of Korean students about Southeast Asia and also India.
Given the existing security and strategic cooperation ASEAN countries have with the United States and China, is there room for South Korea? In the same way, will Korea also change its position in allowing other strategic networks beyond the major powers (US, China, Japan, and Russia) in addressing security issues on the Korean Peninsula?

**YEO:** One of my suggestions is to really try to link the NSP to other regional initiatives. We’ve already seen the NSP’s visibility grow. We’ve seen that other countries have wanted to try to connect their own regional initiatives to the NSP. For instance, last November South Korea and the United States agreed to pursue greater cooperation and coordination between NSP and the US Indo-Pacific strategy. China has done the same with their Belt and Road Initiative. Australia has sought greater coordination between the NSP and Indo-Pacific policy, and of course, the NSP’s three pillars and the ASEAN Outlook of the Indo-Pacific share many of the same goals so on one hand, the NSP Plus is broad enough that you can find natural linkages to other regional initiatives, but the devil is in the details. It’s easy to talk about this sort of synergies but to actually implement them takes hard work, a lot of diplomatic effort goes into finding areas that you can pursue joint projects. Even though rhetorically, you can talk about connecting the NSP to some of these other regional initiatives, it’s a lot harder to put into practice. To ask a rhetorical question, why would South Korea want to coordinate with the United States or Australia, and pursue development and financing for infrastructure when it’s much easier to just go out alone and have Korean companies like Samsung or LG work with local partners? Now, fortunately, I think the need is so great in areas like digital infrastructure in the region, or even here in the Philippines, that other countries - Korea, Australia, China - could all work in this area, but can there be some type of cooperation or coordination? That’s something that the NSP can look to. In terms of addressing the peace pillar component to NSP Plus, whether it’s traditional or non-traditional security, Korea can still address strategic gaps without making it look like it’s trying to insert its own policy on top of existing initiatives like the Indo-Pacific strategy. NSP is not a strategic roundtable on prospects and recommendations for new southern policy plus.
policy but one can find connections with other regional initiatives that are
taking place to make the NSP more relevant. I have more general comments
about South Korea’s middle power strategy which ties into the NSP, but I
think I’ll stop to let other participants chime in as well.

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is expected to have a huge
economic impact on the Philippines by creating
more jobs and enhancing the participation of
different micro to medium enterprises. How
can the NSP Plus take advantage of this?

KIM: So, you first mentioned RCEP so I’d like to share my opinion on what
the NSP Plus should be focusing on: in economic sectors. As I mentioned
earlier, Korea needs to move forward with new policy initiatives that break
away from a one-way policy for the benefit of Korea. To do so, we need
cooporation in the areas, Korea-ASEAN or India all they want. In the first
session mentioned, for example, the Philippines has some strategic area
for investments, so the Korean government and companies should think
about the needs of partner countries more actively or strongly. Also, in the
last session mentioned, a trade investment relationship between Korea and
ASEAN or India is becoming more important for both sides in the new era
of trade order and from the perspective of Korea, I think Korea has relative
limitations in resources compared to countries that already have close ties
with ASEAN and India like, for example, US, China, or Japan so I think
it’s very important to find what Korea can do well corresponding to the
needs of ASEAN countries and India. In this regard, we conducted a survey
to experts in ASEAN and India and what they need for NSP Plus. Based
on this, ASEAN and Indian experts expect that Korea’s role in such areas
as the digital economy, infrastructure like smart cities, and e-commerce,
e-government is feasible, and it is also suggested that Korea would be able
to gain a competitive edge in areas such as building digital capabilities and
human resources and expanding free trade order and technology transfer
exchange. I think it would be Korea’s primary task to find tangible projects
in which Korea-ASEAN and India can cooperate in these areas. I think it will be a challenge for Korea to find new ideas of cooperation with the mid-and long-term vision and it will be important to maintain close dialogue channels with ASEAN and India in major cooperation areas. As you mentioned, I said Korea now, we, among Korean policymakers and researchers, we think about the new form of FTA, for example, if Korea’s FTA was centered on market opening in the past, now Korea's future equities we think need to present new models that emphasize development and sector-specific cooperation, or even human resources building. I think strengthening the capabilities of small and medium enterprises on both sides will also be an important task in the future, and in this regard, NSP could contribute to the traditional form of FTAs and widen the range of cooperation between Korea and ASEAN and India. That’s all. Thank you.

**YSLA:** NSP Plus aims to develop mutually beneficial trade relations and investment between ASEAN and Korea, and I think this is a good opportunity to explore investments in e-commerce, fintech, especially now that many Southeast Asian countries, because of the pandemic, are shifting towards e-commerce. Speaking of having a mutually beneficial trade relation I believe that South Korea should have a consistent consultation on customs-related matters to further optimize trade relations. I think they’ve already included this in the ASEAN-ROK Plan of Action for 2021-2025, and this is a good opportunity to basically interact with ASEAN member states when you talk about free trade because when I was working with the ASEAN-Korea Center, there have been issues as regards to how to optimize trade relations between ASEAN-Korea. There’s also a need to help Korean businessmen understand how Southeast Asian nations conduct their business. Many business forums are being conducted in South Korea that talks about Southeast Asia, but the focus is more on how to set up a business, and how to go around the requirements needed to set up a business. But there’s a need to further understand the business culture of Southeast Asia because it’s quite diverse.
As I mentioned, in the people-to-people exchanges, there’s also a need to deepen the understanding of the Korean businessmen on how Southeast Asian nations are doing their own business. Moreover, I believe that Korea should also try to reach out to ASEAN countries to address the imbalance, in terms of Korean investments. Right now, investments from Korea are skewed towards the CLMV (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam) countries. Though I understand that there is a reason why investments are pouring into the CLMV sub-region and it’s because of the disparity between the member states. However, there’s also a need to pour in investments in the BIMP-EAGA region because that’s where I think many projects have been lagging behind, so I think NSP is a good opportunity for South Korea to ramp up its investment and also trade relations using the RCEP.

How can South Korea contribute to ASEAN’s collective capacity to respond to urgent non-traditional security concerns (e.g. transnational crimes, terrorism, and cybersecurity among others)?

YE0: I thought Prof. Cruz shared some really interesting insights by saying how many of the issues in dealing with COVID-19 are related to one another: climate change, sustainable development, and migration are all inter-related. In the sense that the NSP pulls all these issues together, I think the NSP can offer an advantage in addressing non-traditional security. The advantage is not that you have new or more initiatives per se, although we are seeing that, but it’s that you begin to link these issues within one framework, in this case, the NSP Plus.

EOM: In my thoughts, K-drama and K-pop show only the bright side of Korea, but in contrast, I think the movies are very different.
Korea seen from the outside is an already advanced country, but within the Korean society, issues like the socio-economic inequality, political conflicts, and discrimination against the minority and the gender – this kind of issues is very hard and very serious so in that means, I think the book is more reflective and it shows the different kinds of social situation and phenomena. I think that in the Philippines also with this kind of job like Professor Bae’s translation, I believe it will be an opportunity for intellectually conscious citizens in Korea and ASEAN, or Korean and Philippine citizens to make a different kind of cooperation.

CRUZ: I do like to touch on this point about the translation I think that these days everything is multimedia, and I do think that that is a way to promote something like niche diplomacy in South Korea because if you focus on something like green growth which I think is a very strong message, first, it gives policy an identity. It’s not just something quite broad that anyone else can do saying that I’m going to do green environmental diplomacy gives someone immediately a brand, right? And if everything follows, I do think that the brand will be given some kind of structure. It’ll stick into the mind of people just like everyone knows these contemporary brands like McDonald’s. The minute they think of South Korea, they’ll think of something green, right? I do think that multimedia messaging is very important and that can be linked to Hallyu for example. I’ll give you an example, maybe from Japan. Everyone knows Miyazaki films, and everyone knows that Miyazaki films have an environmental message, right? Even though it’s not explicitly said, this is the inherent message of the thing and I do think that subtle messaging through culture and even through technology is a great idea in this particular age, considering millennials and Gen Z how we tick. For example, like Globe, these days have a G-cash, and if you use G-cash, you get to grow a tree, right?
You know how people are just sitting around these days in quarantine, and it’s hard to go out, and people are afraid to go out. I do think that’s a great way to promote something that can be used for the environment, or garbage clean-up, or anything related to disaster management. Just thinking of new and creative ways to involve the youth, to involve a lot of people, and get them interested in the issue without being overly preachy about it, and I do think that this sounds kind of vague, but this is extremely effective. I mean six million trees grown just because of the simple app. I think recently the effective culture can be seen in the Queen’s Gambit. There was this Netflix show called the Queen’s Gambit and suddenly 100,000 people are signing up for chess, so I do think this is a great idea. However, translation just to hearken that point might I don’t know if we have a very strong reading culture in the Philippines so Dr. Eom, I hate to disappoint you but it’s just a lot of people go to Manila International Book Fair, but I don’t know how many people are actually doing reading quite regularly. So, a multimedia approach is something worth investing in to promote all sorts of initiatives also related to climate change, disaster management, etc. I think the Linguistics Department has done a great job, for example, at taking language and applying it to climate, or even disaster management, COVID-19 pandemic awareness, because this is a multilingual country so maybe look into that.
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On April 27th, 2016, the University of the Philippines launched the Korea Research Center, with the support of the Academy of Korean Studies (AKS) Korean Studies Promotion Service, aiming to provide Filipino scholars and researchers with opportunities to widen their interest in Korean studies. The Center hopes to be a venue for students and professionals to produce meaningful comparative research and also to promote collaborative partnerships among Korean and Philippine institutions.

The Center serves as a university-wide hub that helps promote and develop Korean Studies in the University and the country. It sponsors interdisciplinary and inter-college research and education activities on Korean studies, as well as facilitates the training of the next generation of Koreanists in the country.

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