Japan-Korea Relations 20 Years After the Kim-Obuchi Summit
Session II “Long Term Policy Options” at CEIP

Make Japan-Korea Relations GREAT AGAIN:
Looking back at the 1998 Partnership Declaration,
and Looking forward to another 20 years

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Why Japan-Korea reconciliation is hard to achieve

Once a GREAT period of time...

- Strong political will of Obuchi and Kim Dae-jung in 1998
- Balance among different issues and policy priorities
- Japan-Korea relations in a “bigger picture”

However it did not last because

- Overrepresentation of history issues
- Underrepresentation of security cooperation
- Lots of documents but always questions about “sincerity”
# Evaluation of 2015 accord

Overall positives with some development needs, and we believe “*pucta sunt servanda* (agreements must be kept)”

<table>
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<th>Positives</th>
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<td>“finally and irreversibly resolved”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two <em>waza-ari</em> as <em>i-ppon</em> like in <em>Judo</em></td>
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<td>Welcome from third parties (State Dept. and NSC)</td>
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<th>Development needs</th>
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<td>Only Ministers’ press conference</td>
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<td>No emotionally compelling pictures</td>
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However, things did not turn out as expected

**Korea**
- Moon Jae-in declared the issue unresolved
- “Hey, the perpetrators, do NOT claim it’s over.”

**Japan**
- Strong perception of Koreans’ “moving the goal post”
- “Korea fatigue/passing” is widespread both as the elite and grassroots levels
A picture is worth a thousand words
PM Abe meets the survivors at Pearl Harbor.
“Enemies that had fought each other so fiercely have become friends bonded in spirit.”
How to maximize “the power of reconciliation”

• Even between the allies, “the power of reconciliation” needed to be carefully crafted

• Smart public diplomacy and iconic imagery are all the more pressing in the hard case of post-colonial reconciliation between Japan and Korea
Sitting PM Koizumi could have been a Willy Brandt
French and German leaders at Verdun
Not moving the goalpost, but “moving” pictures
If not friends, we can be good rivals.
Do not let “the weakest link” break

“Japan and Korea should be teammates”

“Japan should not meddle in US-ROK alliance issues”

“GSOMIA”

“Alliance

“We should not be in the `same bed, different dreams` situation“
Sequence of US/Japan and US/ROK
Do no leave one member behind in Team Pursuit
Effect of 38-sec movie on more security cooperation

**Japan**

- Japan-ROK Air Movie=1
- Right=1
- Male
- College Education
- High Political Interest

**South Korea**

- Japan-ROK Air Movie=1
- Left=1
- Male
- College Education
- High Political Interest
Policy Proposals

• Bring in the military in public diplomacy in addition to the State Department, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the White House, the Blue House, and the Prime Minister’s Office

• Target the right segment of the population at the right time through the right channel based on hard evidence available in the academia

• Appoint a right person as communications director in order to win the hearts and minds of the people in the era of populist surge