

Panel: Leadership Transitions in the Two Koreas (Violet/Cosmos)

Date/Time: April 26, 2012 / 17:30-18:45

Organizing Institution: Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)

Talking Points for: Kenneth Gause
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Since Kim Chong-il's death on December 17, the new regime under Kim Chong-un has been embarked on a strategy of consolidation. The North Korean propaganda apparatus has been engaged in a media campaign to portray the young leader as the unchallenged and unquestioned Supreme Leader. There have also been rumors of purges within the party, state, and military apparatuses. In April, the regime will convene the Supreme People's Assembly and a Fourth Party Conference, which should provide useful information on the nature of the post-Kim Chong-il leadership configuration.

Ken Gause will discuss on-going North Korean leadership dynamics. He will explore three possible post-Kim Chong-il leadership configurations that could be emerging: Kim Chong-un as the Supreme Leader, Kim as the head of the unified collective leadership, and Kim as the head of a fractured collective leadership. Each configuration carries with it unique implications for North Korean domestic, security, and foreign policy. Each is also based on unique assumptions of leadership cohesion, which has implications for regime decision-making and stability. Ken Gause will conclude with an overview of the SPA meeting and Fourth Party Conference and clues each provides for the future direction of leadership politics in North Korea.

* The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.
