

**Session:** Session 2-2 (Flashpoints in the Indo-Pacific)

**Date/Time:** April 25, 2023 / 13:10-14:25

**Rapporteur:**

Jargalan Byambatsogt, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies

**Moderator:**

Lee Chung Min, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; KAIST

**Speakers:**

Ahn Ho-Young, Former Korean Ambassador to the United States

Walter L. Sharp, Former Commander, United Nations Command, ROK-US Combined Forces Command, United States Forces Korea

Kent E. Calder, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University

Bonnie S. Glaser, German Marshall Fund of the U.S.

Gordon Flake, Perth USAsia Centre, The University of Western Australia

Ankit Panda, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

**Session Sketch:**

Concurrent Session 2-2 of the 2023 Asan Plenum, titled “Flashpoints in the Indo-Pacific,” started with a series of questions about the panelists’ positions on the flashpoints in the region. Ahn Ho-Young, former Korean Ambassador to the United States, noted the consensus in motion from DC that something must be done about the North Korean nuclear issue. If its impact was getting from both sides, we are on the right track so far. The second important issue is diplomacy - all time we are knocking the door of North Korea.

Walter L. Sharp, former Commander of the United Nations Command, ROK-US Combined Forces Command, and United States Forces Korea, discussed the strength of military alliances and how defense spending is going up, along comes the need for more involvement and more exercises. The deterrence can be embodied through trilateral cooperation between South Korea, Japan and the U.S., and mutual planning and understanding is crucial.

Kent E. Calder of Johns Hopkins University SAIS observed that in the long run, the existential nuclear threats and Taiwan-related contingencies are of concern in the region, and in the short term, the concerns are centered in Northeast Asia due to geopolitical implications for Russia. Dr. Calder emphasized the importance of the interactive relationships not only between South Korea and the U.S. but also with Japan.

Bonnie S. Glaser of the German Marshall Fund in the U.S. stated that there are limited good analogies to be drawn between Taiwan and Ukraine. Nonetheless, it has been a useful wake-up call, for people in Taiwan, and for the international community. And in that regard, of course,

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## Session Sketch

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a war that we didn't expect would happen, could happen. We need to prepare for it. The Taiwan situation is fairly unique, but we should worry about Taiwan, for many reasons. There are many reasons to be concerned not just in the United States, but other places.

Gordon Flake of the Perth USAsia Centre at the University of Western Australia next cited how China commands between 60 and 70 percent of global rare earth mining, and about 85 to 90 percent of rare earth processing, for rare earth elements. The risks to global supply chains, in particular, the risk to global supply chains in critical materials, and rare earth elements in future energy materials are something that needs more attention.

Ankit Panda from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace discussed how security dilemma is deepening as countries perceive their adversaries to be taking actions to improve their own self-defense capabilities. And in response, they have to take action to augment their own defense. In terms of longstanding efforts to augment conventional deterrence, he identified Taiwan's growing asymmetric capabilities and China and Korea where there is no shortage of quantitative work.

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