

Panel: Political Reform in China (Cosmos & VioletRoom)

Date/Time: Tuesday, December 11, 2012 / 12:45-14:00

Talking Points for: Kim Jae Cheol, Professor, Catholic University of Korea

Despite appeals for and talk of much-needed political reforms in the lead-up to the 18th Congress of the CCP, the Congress in November turned out to be much ado about nothing. The new leadership, headed by General Secretary Xi Jinping, is dominated by conservatives. In addition, the Politburo Standing Committee members were selected the old-fashioned way: There was no intra-party multiple-candidate election. Finally, the Work Report of the Congress in no way suggested substantial political reforms were coming in the near future. The CCP, therefore, chose the status quo. For the time being, instead of pushing for long-stalled political reform, the new leadership may focus on building a good image as leaders of the people by tackling some pressing problems, including corruption. The remaining question would be whether (and if so, when) Xi is going to pursue his own initiatives, as his predecessors did, once he consolidates his power base.

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