

Session: Northeast Asia and LIO

Date/Time: April 25, 2018 / 13:30-15:00

Rapporteur:

Troy Stangarone, Korean Economic Institute of America

Moderator:

Evans J.R. Revere, Albright Stonebridge Group

Speakers:

Lee Yong Wook, Korea University

Douglas H. Paal, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Daniel R. Russel, Asia Society Policy Institute

Soeya Yoshihide, Keio University

Wang Dong, Peking University

Session Sketch:

The Session 4 topic, Northeast Asia and the Liberal International Order, explored the divide between the liberal and the illiberal order in Northeast Asia.

Lee Yong Wook began the session by arguing that it is not that there is a divide between the liberal and illiberal order in Northeast Asia, but rather that there is not a functioning order in Northeast Asia. Despite high levels of economic integration in the region, he noted that there is no economic framework for Northeast Asia.

** The views expressed herein are summaries and may not necessarily reflect the views of the speakers or their affiliated institutions.*

Douglas Paal, in a similar vein, suggested that the region faces a contrast between being an economic giant, but security midget, as a result of the high levels of economic interaction, but a low level of security cooperation.

Danny Russel also reinforced this theme in noting that it is difficult for the states of the region to find joint security solutions in light of the region’s diversity. However, he also noted that the real contest is not between China and the United States, but rather between universality and regional influence.

Soeya Yoshihide recommended that the region consider two potential futures – one with China and one without either China or the United States. What is missing from this equation, he said, is a discussion among the other states of Asia about what type of regional order they would like to see develop. The type of discussions he envisions are similar to the decision of Asian states to move forward with the TPP after the U.S. withdrawal, where the other states in East Asia shape the rules and norms and then ask China to participate. In this process, Korea and Japan should work together and can play an important leadership role. He also suggested that Korea should join the now CPTPP.

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