Preliminary Session

The conference opened with welcome remarks by Choi Kang, vice president of the Asan Institute, who expressed the Asan Institute’s pleasure to serve as host. Dr. Kang thanked the co-sponsors, including the Seoul Forum, The Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI) and the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) for their support. Dr. Kang expressed his anticipation for the discussion about how constructive powers such as South Korea, Canada and Australia could cooperate on regional and global security challenges.

Len Edwards, Canada’s head of delegation and a former ambassador to South Korea, thanked the hosts and provided a background to the meeting. Building on Peter Jennings’s “kangamoose” metaphor used at the CIGI-ASPI meeting in Singapore, Mr. Edwards challenged the participants to think of ways to integrate the Korean “tiger” into constructive power cooperation. Specifically, is Korea ready to engage Canada as an economic and security partner?

Lee Hong-koo, the President of the Seoul Forum and a former Prime Minister of South Korea, began his remarks by noting Korea’s uncertainties about whether its future could be as prosperous as its post-war past. He noted the clear imperative to review US-Korea relations in light of changing regional politics, including the rise of China as a potential peer competitor to the United States. To maintain regional stability, constructive powers such as Australia, Canada and Korea can play a role in supporting a pan-regional economic and strategic framework. Hahm Chaibong, president of the Asan Institute, echoed this sentiment, noting that the region requires new and original thinking provided by the constructive powers.

Session 1: Structural Changes in Security Environment and Governance/Architecture in the Asia-Pacific

The opening session explored two sets of questions. First, what are the characteristics of the regional security environment and are they changing? Second, are regional security institutions coping or not? If not, what are the shortcomings?

The opening speaker described five security conditions in the Asia-Pacific region, including the rise of China, American strategic rebalancing, regional economic interdependence, the growth of volatile security issues, and the conceptual distinction between the traditional security concerns that afflict Northeast Asia and the non-traditional security concerns that preoccupy Southeast Asia. The speaker then considered five possible security mechanisms, including a concert of great powers, a confrontation between American- and Chinese-led blocs, multilateral structures, minilateral cooperative arrangements and the perpetuation of US hegemonic order. Clearly, a combination of the first and last is most desirable, but not the most feasible. In this context, constructive powers can expand existing cooperation, act as mediators or initiate new cooperation through the promotion of new ideas. Importantly, however, these efforts should emerge organically and from the ground up.
The second speaker considered five different models of conflict prevention in the Asia-Pacific region, including Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs), preventive diplomacy and mediation, early warning, the globalization of hazard and collective intervention. The speaker noted considerably positive trends on all fronts with the exception of collective intervention. However, progress is typically slow paced and consensus driven, modelled on the “ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] way.” The speaker was sanguine about the prospects for external powers — such as Canada, Australia and Korea — to support the early warning and the globalization of hazard styles of conflict prevention as a function of these countries’ considerable capacity advantages.

The discussants noted that although no one in Asia wants conflict, it is possible for countries to be sucked into it inadvertently. Given domestic distractions in both China and the United States, there is room for constructive powers to contribute new thinking to regional security challenges. History issues were one area cited as a potential area for contribution given the circular nature of Asian efforts to reconcile. Territorial disputes could also benefit from third party arbitration.

It was observed that regional security architecture is stalemated on the question of preventive diplomacy because of a lack of regional leadership on this question. One possible solution is the creation of soft institution building that is more flexible than current models. This effort would necessarily need to include at least a majority of ASEAN states to be legitimate. The ADMM + ministerial level dialogue is one such example.

The discussion centred on the notion of “new ideas.” One participant noted that Canada has a considerable track record of bringing new ideas to regional security discussions and that it will continue to do so at a track two level. These dialogues retain utility because they allow regional partners to sidestep sensitive issues. Such dialogues could explore the region’s historical record or line up regional architecture with different potential pathways to conflict. Specific new ideas suggested included the adoption of an “agree to disagree” formula to be applied to issues that attract nationalist sentiment, based on the Canada-US Arctic Cooperation Agreement. This notion is familiar in both China-Taiwan and in Sino-Japanese relations. Constructive powers may be able to inject positive sum thinking into problems perceived as zero-sum and serve as “truth tellers,” in the tradition of the International Crisis Group.

Discussion also centred on feasible roles for constructive powers. One speaker noted that constructive powers could contribute to the emerging variable geometry of the Asia-Pacific, which includes the rise of India. As this geometry grows, it will need to become more flexible. Furthermore, constructive powers can link Asia with the broader world. On regional issues, constructive powers can support cooperative efforts by great powers, while avoiding the exacerbation of disputes by inadvertently taking sides. Although it would be difficult for constructive powers to mediate disputes between great powers, they could band together to create a critical mass of strategic value sufficiently salient so as to check great power excesses. A number of speakers noted that regional economic interdependence is robust and that a region-wide FTA would be a way to reinforce this. One speaker noted the precedent of macro-level economic surveillance, driven by China and Japan, as an area where regional cooperation is quite good.
Session 2: New Developments in Security Challenges in the Asia-Pacific

The second session opened with a synopsis of recent developments on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia. The North has restarted its Yongbyon reactor, which can provide enough plutonium for one nuclear warhead per year. There has been speculation that the United States is prepared to sign a non-aggression pact with the North in exchange for denuclearization, but the problem is that there is no consensus as to the conditions under which the parties will restart negotiations. Problematically, each country views the Six-Party Talks in a different light. Japan, for instance, views the talks as a venue to deal with the abduction issue. At the same time, the security situation in the wider region is deteriorating due to territorial disputes and the legacies of history. Furthermore, the region is still trying to understand what Chinese leaders mean when they call for a “new type of great power relationship” with the United States.

Within this context, Korean President Park Geun-hye has called for a three-pillared foreign policy focussed on trust building with North Korea, peace and cooperation in Northeast Asia, and middle power diplomacy worldwide. Leaving aside the “trustpolitik” aimed at the North, the latter two pillars suggest that South Korea is taking the notion of “constructive power” very seriously. Fostering regional cooperation in a region as powerful as Northeast Asia is an inherently “constructive” proposition. Furthermore, at the sixty-eighth session of the UN General Assembly in 2013, Korea helped inaugurate the MITKA group of countries with Mexico, Indonesia, Turkey and Australia.

The second speaker discussed the legal and political challenges associated with the attribution of cyber attacks. Given the multiplicity of actors involved in the cyber domain, there is a considerable credibility gap when it comes to attribution. Unlike conventional forms of warfare, there is no straight line between origin and responsibility. Furthermore, the diffuse nature of cyber actors challenges existing legal standards on state responsibility. Meanwhile, at the political level, uncertainty of responsibility may become hostage to audience costs, leading to escalation spirals before responsibility is accurately determined. In this context, there are three areas where constructive powers might reasonably contribute. By virtue of their status as technologically
advanced countries, with a stake in the international system, constructive powers could argue for a set of norms that govern cyber attacks, including: that attribution at all times be based on the best available technical practices; that targets be careful in their assumptions; and that attribution should only be made after engagement with the suspected source country. Constructive powers could also help create an institution to address attribution of cyber attacks, modelled on the World Health Organization.

The discussants noted that North Korean provocations continue to be a dilemma for China because of its role as benefactor to the North and trade partner to the South. However, this role could be integral in fostering ties between the two countries. For example, China could host a series of exchanges between young and professional Koreans from both sides of the border in the region. It was also noted that the second pillar of Park’s foreign policy, the creation of peace and cooperation in Northeast Asia, could prove to be a valuable way to push the Six-Party Talks into a fully fledged regional security institution for Northeast Asia.

The discussion centred on the challenges associated with the cyber issue, including the wide variance across attacks and the mixed motivations of the numerous actors that engage in cyber activities. These challenges complicate efforts to assign institutional responsibility for governance. It was suggested that an international body be created that serves as a clearing house for cyber attribution. At the same time, however, some were critical of the utility of such a “global ombudsman” under conditions in which one knows where the attacks come from, as on the Korean peninsula. In this case it seems the most prudent way forward is in the investment in cyber defence capabilities. Others noted that cyber has changed the face of war. Attribution presumes the requirement for reprisal and related concerns of escalation management. Instead, it seems that cyber attacks are a part of peacetime in as much as many relate to economic issues. However, building cyber defence is not incompatible with the creation of a global cyber ombudsman; the aim is to create norms of restraint in the cyber domain.

Discussion on the Korean peninsula centred on the issue of trust and dispute management. It was suggested that regional states begin preparing for the next North Korean provocation now, as it is likely only a matter of time. However, in the long-term, South Korea needs to think about the conditions under which it could reconcile with the North. Furthermore, some were skeptical that Koreans were capable of making themselves sufficiently vulnerable to allow for trust to be built with the North.

Others noted the importance of CSBMs in improving trust across the region. Military uptake of CSBMs towards the end of the Cold War did a lot to improve ties between the Soviet Union and the West. Another participant noted that the accepted orthodoxy of extended deterrence in Northeast Asia should be challenged on the grounds that such a posture legitimizes nuclear weapons as a stabilizing tool. This could be an area of new thinking from constructive powers. Another speaker noted that North Korea does not have an extended deterrence guarantee from China. Perhaps nuclear safety and nonproliferation are more important issues.
Session 3: Emerging Non-Traditional Security Issues in the Asia-Pacific

The chair opened the session with a call for discussion on the most difficult non-traditional security issues including food, energy and water security, and environmental degradation.

The first speaker noted that although each country identifies in some way as a constructive or middle power, there are inconsistencies. Canada’s middle power track record has not endured and Australia has always thought of itself as more than a middle power. Korea’s global influence stems from the fact that it is a non-Western market democracy that is surrounded by strong states, with which it has relatively cordial relations. However, given their capacity and legacies, all three constructive powers are currently underperforming. The speaker echoed the theme that Northeast and Southeast Asia confront different security challenges. Northeast Asia struggles to address non-traditional issues because of the dominance of traditional security issues. In this vein, the speaker noted that engagement at the global level, through the G20 for instance, might be a way for the three to cooperate more effectively. Simultaneously, the three should improve their bilateral ties, illustrated by the Australia-Korea 2+2 dialogue.

The second speaker noted that non-traditional security issues are constantly evolving and are global in nature. Specific threats include terrorism and extremism, disasters and epidemics, transnational organized crime, cyber threats, environmental degradation, energy security, and weapons of mass destruction and nuclear safety. Solutions include improved information sharing, crisis management mechanisms, civil-military cooperation, intelligence sharing, capacity building, legislative reforms to clarify governmental responsibilities, and education and training.

The discussants argued that there is little distinction between traditional and non-traditional security issues in practice — they are just easier to handle. The areas where constructive powers could contribute are numerous. They could support the biannual humanitarian and disaster relief exercise conducted under the auspices of the ASEAN Regional Forum; they could support the Japanese regional nuclear safety initiative which shares lessons learned; they could leverage their experiences in Africa to share notes on fragile and failed states; they could foster an international agreement not
to quantitatively increase nuclear arsenals; and they could reach out to other influential powers that lack similar “constructive” legacies, such as Brazil and South Africa.

The discussion centred on the feasibility of constructive power action in the context of regional power politics and their bilateral relations. All three constructive powers are US allies, so their impartiality may be suspect. It was also noted that Canada and Australia have been competitors in the past, despite their broadly similar regional security agendas. This is a function of Australia’s perception that Canada might free ride on its two-decade effort to improve ties with its Asian neighbours. Nevertheless, some issues could be tackled collaboratively, others separately. Other speakers noted that the list of non-traditional security issues is quite long and that domestic support for action by constructive powers may not exist. Indeed, it was noted that engagement on traditional security issues requires an underlying strategic rationale. In the case of Canada, this rationale is economic, so the case for spending money on non-traditional security needs to be made in Ottawa.

The discussion also centred on which bureaucratic institution is best suited to be the primary tool of engagement. The military is often the most logical choice because of its logistical capacity, but in many cases police forces may be more appropriate. From a Canadian perspective, areas where the Canadian forces may engage the Asia-Pacific include peacekeeping, anti-piracy, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. Other areas that may prove fruitful are not military in nature and include pandemic planning, nuclear safety, national police force training and capacity building in the judiciary. Keeping the focus on technical assistance will go a long way to depoliticizing non-traditional security issues.

At the conceptual level, constructive powers should take the time to map out their relevance to the region. Regional security architecture in the Asia-Pacific is inward looking, which stands in contrast to the more outward focus of constructive powers. In this vein, one speaker noted that Asia should be explicit about what it wants from the constructive powers. Prioritization could then be achieved by matching perceived issue importance with the various capacities and interests of the constructive powers.

**Session 4: Constructive Powers’ Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region**

The first speaker noted that the Asia-Pacific has a great deal of cooperative spirit, but it is not formalized. The constructive powers are looking for a good place to model cooperation and the Asia-Pacific region is appropriate for this. Furthermore, countries in the region seem receptive to constructive power ideas. President Park’s Northeast Asia cooperation initiative echoes past Canadian efforts to build confidence in the region, including the North Pacific Security Dialogue and the South China Sea dialogues. Nevertheless, Northeast Asia is a tough area for the constructive powers to operate because security issues are tied so closely to sovereignty. Collectively, the constructive powers bring good ties that can support their efforts in the region. Korea has excellent ties to Beijing; Canada has excellent ties to Washington, but retains its independence. As noted
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previously, the only way the United States and China will get into conflict is as a function of circumstances: constructive powers can improve those circumstances. Constructive powers should engage in areas where the region is accepting of their work and which are consistent with the strengths and interests of the constructive powers. The construction of regional institutions has been layered, gradual and ASEAN-centric. Where can constructive powers contribute in this context?

The second speaker argued that in the Asia-Pacific, the demand for cooperation exceeds supply; thus, there are a number of ways that constructive powers can contribute to regional security. The speaker presented a typology of constructive powers that suggested a spectrum between two ideal types: ideational constructive powers and interest-based constructive powers. Korea is moving from an interest-based model to an ideational one, while Canada and Australia have always tended to be on the ideational side of the spectrum. Those constructive powers that have mixed motivations are the ones most capable of engaging with a wide variety of actors on a wide variety of issue areas.

The discussants again encouraged the meeting to think about the rationale for constructive power cooperation. At times, the discussion suggested the constructive powers are a solution looking for a problem. This concern drives to the heart of the concern of policy makers: how are a given country’s interests supported by constructive power cooperation? The Canadian government in particular will need to be convinced of the merits of the initiative. Canada has no malign interests in the Asia-Pacific region, but its interests are self-motivated and commercial. The conditions under which these interests thrive are also consistent with the interests of the region as a whole: secure sea lanes, deep commercial ties, and a bridge between the United States and the region.

The discussion opened with recognition of the changing nature of Canadian regional engagement. Canada approached the region as an ideational constructive power in the 1980s and 1990s and offered a series of track two initiatives to improve the regional security climate. It was able to do this because there was little indigenous effort on this front at the time. However, this changed and the region is now home to a number of active security institutions and dialogues. In contrast to its previous overtures, Canada now approaches the region as an interest-based constructive power, seeking to contribute to regional security to pave the way to improved trade ties as part of its trade diversification strategy.

Canada’s role can therefore be both symbolic (more military attaches, peacekeeping centres) and practical (rule of law training). In particular, Canada can serve as a bridge between the region and the United States because of their historically close personal relationship. Canada and the US now have a senior official level dialogue on the Asia-Pacific. Canada’s US experience is valued in the region. For instance, initial skepticism about Canadian participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership evaporated as states realized that they wanted the TPP to function like the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The discussion also addressed the issue of whether trilateral cooperation was the best mechanism to approach regional security cooperation. One speaker noted that trilateral cooperation is most effective if it’s built on robust bilateral arrangements; it can support and enhance these ties. This
suggests that improved bilateral cooperation among the constructive powers would enhance the impact of the regional security efforts.

In terms of ways for the constructive powers to engage the region, it was noted that this cooperation does not have to occur regionally. Dialogues on fragile and failing states could draw on African experiences; all three are members of the G20 as well. One participant from the region suggested that the constructive powers could alleviate some of the burden on the US in supporting the global order so that Washington can focus on the Asia-Pacific region. In the same vein, the constructive powers could coordinate their responses to the emergence of China as a rule setter in international order. At the regional level, the constructive powers could act as rule makers in a region increasingly characterized by rivalry.

Session 5: Round Table — Towards Bilateral and Trilateral Constructive Powers Cooperation

Korea will welcome Canada to the region because it does not have a reputation as a self-interested power. Canada was one of the first countries that Korea reached out to in the early 1990s as it opened to the world; the two countries had a 95 percent compatible UN voting record. Importantly, North Korea also has a good view of Canada. Korea and Australia have impressive ties. The relationship boasts robust economic ties, Korea’s second 2+2 dialogue after the United States and consultations on UN issues. Similarly, data from the Asia-Pacific Foundation of Canada shows a tremendous amount of goodwill in Canada towards Korea.

Canadian speakers repeatedly returned to the notion that the current government of Canada’s engagement is self-interested; it needs to focus on outcomes and on the tools needed to achieve them. Constructive powers do not have power in the region; at best, they have influence. Others noted that the objectives of constructive power cooperation stem from common interests in rules, regimes and codes of conduct. Strengthening regional and global institutions and making them more effective should be a priority. They should bring their expertise to global, as well as regional forums. Also, they should promote the humanitarian aspects of foreign policy, particularly as relates to refugee crises perpetuated by events on the Korean peninsula. On the trade front, the constructive
powers should work to keep both the Trans Pacific Partnership and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership on the table; deepening economic interdependence is good for the region. On this note, the principals exchanged thanks and the meeting adjourned.

Workshop Agenda
Unless otherwise indicated, all sessions will take place at the Grand Ambassador Seoul Hotel. Workshop agenda is subject to amendments and substitutions.

Doraji Room (4th Fl.)
Friday, October 18, 2013

9:30–9:40 Opening Remarks by Hahm Chaibong

9:40–9:50 Welcoming Remarks by Len Edwards

9:50–10:00 Congratulatory Remarks by Jung Ku-Hyun

10:00–12:00 Session I: Structural Changes in Security Environment and Governance/Architecture in the Asia-Pacific

Chair: Len Edwards
Papers: Kim Young-ho, James Manicom and Fen Hampson
Discussants: Sheen Seongho, Han Feng

12:00–13:30 Lunch, hosted by Lee Hong- Koo, Chairman of SFIA

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Chair: Choi Kang
Papers: Lee Sang Hyun and Mark Raymond
Discussants: Liu Qun, Yoshinobu Yamamoto

15:30–15:45 Break

15:45–17:45 Session III: Emerging Non-Traditional Security Issues in the Asia-Pacific

Chair: Len Edwards
Papers: Lee Shin-wha and Ouyang Wei
Discussants: Ishii Masafumi and Jo Dong-Joon

Chardonnay Room (B1 Fl.)
19:00–21:00 Dinner

Welcoming Remarks: Hahm Chaibong
Keynote Speaker: SaKong II

Doraji Room (4th Fl.)
Saturday, October 19, 2013

9:00–11:00 Session IV: Constructive Powers Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region

Chair: Tanya Ogilvie-White
Papers: Len Edwards, and Leif-Eric Easley

11:00–11:15 Break

11:15–12:30 Round Table: Towards Bilateral and Trilateral Constructive Powers Cooperation

Chair: Yim Sung-joon
Topics:

1. Trilateral constructive powers cooperation — Australia-Canada-Korea
2. Bilateral cooperation — Korea-Canada, Canada-Australia, Australia-Korea

Presenters:
Cho Chang-beom (Former ROK Ambassador to Australia),
David Chatterson (Representative from Canadian Embassy in Seoul)
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