

[T5.1] Meeting with the EU Delegation

# Public Diplomacy in Times of War and Crisis: Values and Norms

Co-hosted by Korean Association for Public Diplomacy & EU Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence

- Date: November 29th, 2024
- Location: SungShin Women's University (SungShin Building 504), Seoul
- Participants: Yeonho Lee, Hyun Cho, Maria Castillo-Fernandez, Tamara Mawhinney, Seung-Keun Lee, Shin Dong Kim

## Summary

The Korean Association for Public Diplomacy (KAPD), in collaboration with the EU Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence, hosted the session "Public Diplomacy in Times of War and Crisis: Values and Norms" on November 29th, 2024, at Sungshin Women's University in Seoul. Moderated by Yeonho Lee, the event featured prominent panelists, including Hyun Cho (former Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs), Maria Castillo-Fernandez (EU Ambassador to Korea), Tamara Mawhinney (Canadian Ambassador to Korea), Seung-Keun Lee (President of KAPD), and Shin Dong Kim (Professor at Hallym University). The session provided a forum for discussing the evolving challenges and strategies in public diplomacy during global crises.

Hyun Cho emphasized the urgency of public diplomacy in addressing pressing issues such as geopolitical instability, climate change, and rising nationalism. He highlighted the need for active collaboration among governments, NGOs, and civil society. Maria Castillo-Fernandez presented the EU's "Global Gateway" initiative as a sustainable alternative to China's Belt and Road Initiative, while also advocating for improved trust and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. Tamara Mawhinney discussed Canada's use of public diplomacy to shape influential narratives, emphasizing the role of AI and social media in advancing Canada's Indo-Pacific strategy and countering authoritarian influences.

Seung-Keun Lee proposed a three-step approach to leveraging public diplomacy for peacebuilding in Northeast Asia, focusing on cultural exchanges, regional integration, and the multilateral cooperation. Shin Dong Kim highlighted the vulnerabilities of public diplomacy during political crises, advocating for minimizing government intervention and promoting civilian-led cultural diplomacy. The session concluded with a shared commitment to advancing values, norms, and international collaboration as critical elements for navigating crises and building a stronger foundation for global public diplomacy.



# Presentations and Discussions

## Yeonho Lee (Yonsei-Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence)

- “We are in a challenging era for public diplomacy, facing rising geopolitical tensions, increased nationalism, and the prioritization of secular values. These challenges are compounded by events such as the U.S. presidential election and growing threats of war. Public diplomacy must adapt with new strategies to overcome these crises and strengthen international cooperation.”
- “This session provides a platform for academic and diplomatic exchange to discuss the future of public diplomacy and establish innovative approaches to address these global challenges.”

## Hyun Cho (Former Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs)

- “Despite the instability caused by the Russia-Ukraine war, U.S.-China strategic rivalry, and the paralysis of UN functions, public diplomacy remains crucial. It offers opportunities to address key global issues like climate change and security.”
- “Governments, NGOs, and civil society must actively participate to overcome challenges, especially in regions like Northeast Asia, where historical conflicts and nationalism persist.”
- “The European integration process offers valuable lessons in promoting coexistence and overcoming nationalism. Collaboration through public diplomacy is essential for strengthening democracy and the rule of law both regionally and globally.”

## Maria Castillo-Fernandez (EU Ambassador to Korea)

- “China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) presents challenges, but the EU’s Global Gateway focuses on collaboration and sustainability, building infrastructure to serve people and foster partnerships.”
- “Improved relations between Japan and Korea require long-term thinking and the transcendence of nationalism. The EU’s peacebuilding efforts can serve as a model.”
- “In the Indo-Pacific, the region’s rising economic significance necessitates strategic trust-building among partners such as Korea, Japan, and ASEAN. Expanding public diplomacy is essential to enhance connectivity and foster mutual understanding over the next four years.”

## Tamara Mawhinney (Canadian Ambassador to Korea)

- “Canada employs two public diplomacy models—the Washington and Brussels approaches—to understand and respond to diverse narratives. Effective public diplomacy helps counter the influence of authoritarian regimes like Russia and China.”
- “Korea’s success in crafting a compelling historical narrative demonstrates the power of public diplomacy. In contrast, Russia and China have struggled to build attractive narratives.”
- “Canada plans to utilize tools such as AI and social media to strengthen its Indo-Pacific strategy, enhancing predictability and effectively communicating its narrative domestically and internationally.”





# Presentations and Discussions

## Seung-Keun Lee (President of KAPD)

- “Northeast Asia faces a security gap due to the lack of multilateral cooperative organizations like NATO. Public diplomacy can help bridge this gap and contribute to fostering peace.”
- “A three-stage peace-building strategy is essential: 1) strengthening cultural exchanges, 2) promoting regional integration, and 3) establishing multilateral cooperation mechanisms.”
- “While establishing multilateral cooperation mechanisms may take time, the soft power of public diplomacy can contribute to creating positive relationships and mutual understanding, paving the way for a peaceful and stable region.”
- Although the establishment of multilateral cooperation mechanisms requires time, it should be pursued as a critical task for regional peace-building.”

## Shin Dong Kim (Professor at Hallym University)

- “Public diplomacy often lacks clear definitions and goals, making it vulnerable during periods of heightened political tension, as clearly demonstrated in the THAAD incident.”
- “During times of political conflict, there is a tendency for confrontation and populism to increase. In such situations, soft power and citizen-led cultural diplomacy offer critical alternatives to traditional hard power approaches.”
- “To enhance the effectiveness of public diplomacy, government intervention should be minimized, allowing for more active citizen-led initiatives.”
- “It is particularly important to strengthen civilian-led cultural diplomacy and soft power strategies. Collaborative communication strategies become especially vital during periods of political turmoil.”

