

## Interaction with Korean political scientists from 10 countries

OKA hosts reception, inviting approx. 100 participants from World Congress of International Political Science Association.



Leading political scientists attending the 28th World Congress of the International Political Science Association (IPSA) pose for photos at the Sono Felice Convention in Gangnam-gu, Seoul, on July 14. From left: Kim Beom-soo, president of the Korean Political Science Association; Lee Tae-gu, professor at Harvard University; Lee Sang-duk, OKA commissioner; Pablo Onate, president of IPSA and professor at the University of Valencia, Spain; Kim Dal-joong, professor emeritus of the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Yonsei University (former president of IPSA); and Park Chan-wook, professor emeritus of the Department of Political Science and International Relations at Seoul National University.

The Overseas Koreans Agency (Commissioner Lee Sang-duk) hosted a meeting on July 14 to hold a discussion with overseas Korean participants of the 28th World Congress of the International Association of Political Sciences, often referred to as the “Olympic Games of Political Science.”

This biennial conference serves as a forum for political scientists from around the world to present and exchange research findings. Korea is the only Asian country to have hosted the event twice, having hosted it in 1997. The current president of the International Political Science Association (IPSA) is professor Pablo Onate of the University of Valencia, a public university in Spain.

This year's World Congress, held in Seoul, opened July 12 at COEX in Gangnam-gu, Seoul, and attracted approximately 3,000 members from 80 countries.

Among them, approximately 170 overseas Korean political scientists are active in over 20 countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, China, Germany and Australia, including Lee Tae-gu, president of the American Political Science Association.

On July 14, the OKA hosted the “Official Reception for Overseas Korean Political Scientists” at the Sono Felice Convention Center in Gangnam-gu, Seoul, in collaboration with the Korean Political Science Association (KPSA, President Kim Beom-soo, professor of Seoul National University). The reception invited approximately 100 overseas Korean political scientists and researchers.

The purpose of this reception was to build a channel between overseas Korean political scientists and the Korean government based on their academic expertise, and to simultaneously explore

the theoretical foundations and practical expansion of policies for overseas Koreans.

The reception included opening remarks by KPSA President Kim Beom-soo, welcoming remarks by OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk, congratulatory remarks by IPSA President Onate and remarks by President Lee Tae-gu (professor at Harvard University) on behalf of the participants.

“Since taking office as the head of OKA last year, I have been deeply impressed by meeting excellent and dedicated compatriots from all over the world, and today is a continuation of that legacy,” Commissioner Lee said. “The OKA has identity, connectivity and mutual prosperity as its core vision, and preserving the identity of the Korean people is a key priority.

“Overseas Korean political scientists are contributing to the Korean communities in each country through their knowledge and experience, and as opinion leaders and educators who promote Korea in the international community, they play an important role in instilling a Korean identity in the next generation. We will continue to support overseas Korean scholars so that they can continue to play a meaningful role on the international stage.”

#### **‘Overseas Korean political scientists play role in instilling identity in next generation’**

“The activities of Korean political scientists are becoming more prominent around the world, and I am grateful to the OKA for hosting this reception,” Onate said.

Lee Tae-gu emphasized: “The history of the Korean diaspora is closely linked to Korea’s struggle for freedom from imperialism. Currently, Koreans in the United States remain vulnerable in areas such as citizenship and health insurance. The OKA is a vital government agency that can work alongside the Korean diaspora.”

Following the event, a luncheon and networking session provided a free exchange of opinions among overseas Korean political scientists. The event also included a viewing of the documentary ‘Hawaii Love Song’ (directed by Lee Jin-young), which musically portrays the lives and loves of Koreans who immigrated to Hawaii in 1902, giving space for the audience to also share their emotions around compatriot identity.

After watching the film, participants deeply resonated with the message of “Koreans in the world, living as part of Korea” and offered diverse perspectives on Korean identity and connectivity.

The OKA plans to use this reception as an opportunity to establish a foundation for an academic community of overseas Koreans through continued communication with overseas Korean political scientists, who are both policymakers and opinion leaders.

Ahead of this on July 13, President Lee Jae Myung stated: “We must prove that democracy provides food on our tables. Only then can we prevent anti-democratic forces disguised as growth from exploiting the cracks of inequality and poverty to destroy



OKA Commissioner Lee Sang-duk delivers a welcoming address at the reception for the 28th World Congress of the International Political Science Association held at the Sono Felice Convention in Gangnam-gu, Seoul, on July 14.

democracy.”

President Lee attended the Seoul General Assembly of IPSA held at COEX in Seoul on this day and delivered an opening address, saying, “As witnessed by the military coup d’etat that destroyed the people’s economy, democracy and the economy are inseparable.”

He criticized the Dec. 3 martial law incident as “an anti-democratic outrage stemming from a desire to annihilate the opponent and seize power in perpetuity, excluding dialogue and compromise.”

#### **‘K-democracy, a beacon and milestone for global democratic citizens’**

“However, the process of overcoming sedition demonstrated the true power of democracy,” Lee said. “The Republic of Korea has embarked on a magnificent ‘Revolution of Light.’ The resilience and democratic strength demonstrated by the Republic of Korea belong not only to Korea but to the entire world. K-Democracy is a beacon and milestone for global democratic citizens.

“We must confront the inequality and polarization that deepen conflict and division, and the political extremism that divides the people. The core of K-democracy is the thorough restoration of freedom, equality and solidarity.”

Even as he said this, he emphasized, “The freedom I speak of is not simply the freedom from interference or restrictions. In these times of crisis, where inequality, polarization and the raging waves of poverty are hindering growth, freedom is linked to the economy.

“What kind of freedom can there be in a society where you have to endure the blazing sun at work without a break room or where your place of residence determines your life and death? Freedom is a warm meal that satisfies hunger and a social safety net that saves one from the swamp of debt.” [장]