CEAS Lecture Series  
ft.  
Nak-Chung Paik  
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“The Korean Peninsula in Flux: South Korea’s ‘Candlelight Revolution’ and Its Impact”

Prof. Paik will begin his lecture by commenting on the latest developments and go on to present certain hypotheses. One, that something like a 'division system' came into place in the peninsula after the Korean War and has persisted to this day, which accounts for the longevity of Korea's division. Two, this reality has been a crucial factor in the formation and maintenance of U.S. hegemony, and the imminent change in that reality will represent further weakening of its hegemony. Three, a major impetus for that change was provided by the mass candlelight demonstrations in South Korea of 2016-17 and their aftermath, a historic process that, despite falling short in many aspects of the classical notion of 'revolution', should indeed qualify as a real revolution. Four, this revolution aims at a better peninsular system than the extant division system: neither full reunification nor a permanent coexistence of two Koreas but a gradual, phased, and innovative reintegration beginning with a loose combination like an 'Association of Korean States'. Five, the work of building such is already in progress.