

The Foreign Policy Team of Candidate Lee Jae-myung Answers Our Questions about Relations with Europe

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The KF-VUB Korea Chair invited the foreign policy teams of the leading candidates to the March 2022 ROK presidential election to answer questions about relations between South Korea and Europe. These are the answers exactly as they were received.

What is your policy towards Korea-EU relations?

Lee Jae-myung considers the EU as a significant partner in order for the Republic of Korea (ROK) to move forward to become a fair, advanced society. With his career experience as human rights lawyer and civil society activist, Candidate Lee is very keen to collaborate with the EU which has played a leading role in promoting universal values such as liberty, democracy, human rights, and rule-based international orders and multilateralism.

The EU has a great deal of experience in building advanced systems and policies across various areas including economy, society and culture. In this context, it gives many aspirations to other countries and serves as a role model for them. Candidate Lee also believes that the EU is an excellent partner for the ROK to pursue a more advanced society commensurate with its enhancing positions.

Candidate Lee has a solid understanding of the current changing dynamics the international community faces, such as the post-pandemic recovery, the progression of 4th industrial revolution, the exacerbation of social

injustice and inequality, the intensifying conflict between the US and China, the emerging issues of new technology, new economy and new security.

It is his view that on the verge of such a dramatic transition, it is crucial for the ROK to adopt a new way of thinking and new approaches in order to promote its national interests and to contribute to establishing peace and prosperity in the international society. In this vein, he considers it important to strengthen further the cooperation with the EU, which has played a proactive and leading role in coping with such challenges and transitions.

Candidate Lee is well aware that the EU has been a very significant economic partner to Korea, with being the largest investor and the third largest export market, and has played a considerable role in maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula as well.

Candidate Lee expects the ROK-EU strategic partnership to expand and solidify to keep up with the changing times. The basic idea is to build up from what the current



administration has been carrying out and extend further to promote more cooperation with the EU.

The potential areas for further cooperation between the two parties include trade, investment, technological and scientific innovation, R&D, semiconductors, digital infrastructure, public health, medicine and culture, as well as foreign and

security affairs including security on the Korean Peninsula, and regional and world peace and stability.

Lee Jae-myung is going to pursue foreign policies based on pragmatism and our national identity-related values to maximize national interests and people's welfare, while actively participating in developing and maintaining international peace and prosperity.

What is your policy towards Korea-NATO relations?

With his knowledge that NATO was initially formed to prevent the catastrophe of further wars in Europe, Lee Jae-myung sees that it is necessary for the ROK to develop further cooperation with NATO, given its military confrontation with North Korea and its nuclear and missile development program and so on.

Candidate Lee believes "Partners across the globe",

the partnership created in 2006 between the ROK and NATO to reinforce shared values such as peace, democracy and human rights, is a good starting point from which to expand cooperation in promoting peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and beyond, as well as in other areas such as cyber security, counter-terrorism, disaster relief, and reconstruction of the Afghanistan.

What is your policy towards Korea-Europe cooperation in the Indo-Pacific?

Lee Jae-myung views that the ROK's diplomatic efforts need to be expanded in line with its enhanced position and reputation, while being aware of the "Indo-Pacific Strategy" that the EU has announced last September, to recognize the increasing significance of the Indo-Pacific region.

He recognizes the need for the ROK to reduce its dependence on economic cooperation with only a limited number of traditional major countries amid the changing global economic environment, and thus believes that it is important for the ROK to diversify its diplomatic channels and partnerships with the nations in the Indo-Pacific region.

Candidate Lee sees many potential areas of cooperation between the ROK and the EU, with priorities placed on the Indo-Pacific strategy put forth by the EU and the New Southern Policy by the Korean government.

In his view, areas of cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region include the supply of vaccines and public healthcare, the construction of infrastructure and plants, digital and cyber security, human capital development, the establishment of a legal system, maritime transport policies, maritime security such as anti-piracy measures, and the preservation of maritime biodiversity.

What is your policy towards Korea-Europe cooperation with like-minded partners in minilateral and multilateral forums?

Faced with rapidly changing international environments and a lot of newly emerging issues, the EU and the ROK can be the best like-minded partners

in upholding shared values of liberty, democracy, human rights, rule of law; in advocating international order based on multilateralism; and in cooperating

together towards resolving global challenges and achieving stability and prosperity of the world. Candidate Lee is well aware and informed of this point.

Candidate Lee believes that it is desirable for the EU and the ROK, as like-minded partners, to enhance bilateral, minilateral, and multilateral cooperation in order to effectively resolve global issues we all face, such as pandemic and contagious disease, climate change, green economy, sustainable development, cyber security, space exploration, counter-terrorism,

maritime security such as anti-piracy measures, development cooperation, and human security.

Lee Jae-myung also believes that being an outstanding universal human values and norms setter and promoter, the EU has, through its policy of critical engagement with North Korea, represented an unbiased, universal voice of the international society towards issues such as North Korea's nuclear and missile development program as well as human rights violations.

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