Japanese Initiatives on the “Korean Question” and the Responses of the US and ROK in the Mid 1970s

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This talk focuses on US-Japanese discussions on the Korean question at the summit meeting between President Gerald Ford and Prime Minister Miki Takeo in the mid-1970s. The matter began with Miki’s overtures to Pyongyang to promote inter-Korean dialogue. Ford and Kissinger, however, regarded Miki’s initiative as premature and potentially destabilizing the favourable equilibrium for the United States and South Korea. This talk examines the context of US-Japanese-Korean diplomacy from the early 1970s and analyzes the discussions that took place around the time of the summit, including South Korea’s responses.

SEUNG-YOUNG (SY) KIM teaches international history and politics of Korea and East Asia in the School of East Asian Studies at the University of Sheffield, with focus on the 20th century. He received a BA from Seoul National University, an MA in international affairs from Columbia University, and a PhD in international affairs from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (Tufts University). Before pursuing his doctoral degree, SY Kim worked as the diplomatic correspondent and the UN correspondent for The Chosun Ilbo newspaper in South Korea. He joined the School of East Asian Studies from September 2011 as Korea Foundation Senior Lecturer, after teaching in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Aberdeen (2003-2011). He published a monograph, American Diplomacy and Strategy toward Korea and Northeast Asia, 1882 to 1950 and After (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), and is currently working on his second book which examines several major turning points of diplomacy in Northeast Asia in the 20th century.