

“New Beginnings in the U.S.-ROK Alliance”

David Straub

David Straub, Associate Director of Shorenstein APARC’s Korean Studies Program and a 2007-08 Pantech Fellow, has been a member of the New Beginnings policy study group on U.S.-South Korean relations since its inception at the beginning of 2008. A 30-year veteran of the State Department and former Korean affairs director there, Straub is one of ten American experts on Korea who have been researching how the U.S.-ROK alliance can be updated and strengthened.

Straub will discuss the origins and working of the New Beginnings group and its recommendations. Co-sponsored by Shorenstein APARC and the New York-based Korea Society, the group has convened in Washington, Seoul, and Stanford, meeting with top officials in both countries. Drawing also on their individual engagement with Korea, the members have issued two sets of recommendations, one to the George W. Bush administration for its final year in office and one for the new administration of Barack Obama.

Although the group’s aim is to advise American administrations, its work and conclusions can be useful to Korean policymakers, journalists, scholars, and others interested in American views of U.S.-Korean relations and North Korea. Members of this continuing project represent the full range of mainstream American opinion on the U.S.-ROK alliance and how to deal with North Korea.

A careful reading of what the group’s reports say—and what they don’t—can offer authoritative insight into American policymakers’ attitudes about the alliance and North Korea. Straub will discuss the consensus of the New Beginnings group on a number of issues of debate in South Korea about American views, including the American bottom line on the North Korean nuclear weapons program, the U.S.-ROK agreement to transfer wartime operational control of ROK forces from the United States to the ROK in 2012, and the U.S.-ROK Free Trade Agreement.

About David Straub: <http://ksp.stanford.edu/people/davidstraub/>

About New Beginnings:

ksp.stanford.edu/research/new_beginnings_postelection_prospects_for_usrok_relations/