

North Korea Economic Forum Special Public Webinar  
"Assessing North Korea's Financial 'Reform' Measures:  
Mobilizing Domestic Financial Resources amid Sanctions"



Thursday  
December 17, 2020  
9:00 am - 10:00 am (EST)  
11:00 pm - 12:00 am (KST)

Virtual Event via Zoom

Speaker: Moon-Soo Yang, Professor, University of North Korean Studies

Moderator: Yonho Kim, Associate Director, GWIKS

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#### EVENT DESCRIPTION

North Korea has been introducing new financial initiatives in the Kim Jong Un era, including commercial banks and upgraded electronic payment systems. In dealing with the economic hardships caused by tough U.N. sanctions in 2017 and 2018 and by Covid-induced border closures this year, Pyongyang stepped up its efforts to mobilize domestic financial resources for the state's fiscal needs. North Korea's financial 'reform' measures should be understood in this context. Please join the North Korea Economic Forum of the GW Institute for Korean Studies for an online discussion on Pyongyang's financial coping mechanism amid economic sanctions.

## PROFILES

### ◇ SPEAKER



**MOON-SOO YANG** is the Vice President for Academic Affairs and a professor at the University of North Korean Studies. He is also a Policy Advisor for the Ministry of Unification and was the President of the Korean Association of North Korean Studies. Prior to joining the University of North Korean Studies, Yang was a Research Fellow at the LG Economic Research Institute (2000-2002) and a reporter at Maeil Economic Daily (1988-1991). His research interests include the North Korean Economy, inter-Korean economic cooperation, and economic integration of two Koreas. He has published numerous books and articles including *Marketization of the North Korean Economy* (2010), *North Korea's Planned Economy and Marketization* (2016), “Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation for North Korean Development: Future Challenges and Prospect,” and “Reformulating South-North Korean Economic Integration.” He received a B.A. in Economics from Seoul National University and holds an M.A. and Ph.D. in Economics from Tokyo University.

### ◇ MODERATOR



**YONHO KIM** is an Associate Research Professor of Practice and the Associate Director of GW Institute for Korean Studies. He specializes in North Korea’s mobile telecommunications and U.S. policy towards North Korea. Kim is the author of *North Korean Phone Money: Airtime Transfers as a Precursor to Mobile Payment System* (2020), *North Korea’s Mobile Telecommunications and Private Transportation Services in the Kim Jong-un Era* (2019) and *Cell Phones in North Korea: Has North Korea Entered the Telecommunications Revolution?* (2014). His research findings were covered by various media outlets, including Wall Street Journal, The Atlantic, Yonhap News, and Libération. Prior to joining GWIKS, he extensively interacted with the Washington policy circle on the Korean peninsula as Senior Researcher of the U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, Senior Reporter for Voice of America’s Korean Service, and Assistant Director of the Atlantic Council’s Program on Korea in Transition. He holds a B.A. and M.A. in International Relations from Seoul National University, and an M.A. in International Relations and International Economics from Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

## BACKGROUND

North Korea Economic Forum (NKEF) is part of the policy program at the George Washington University's Institute for Korean Studies (GIKS). The Forum aims to promote the understanding of North Korean economic issues, distribute well-balanced, deeply researched, and multi-dimensional insights on the North Korean economy and to expand networks among various North Korea watchers,

scholars, and policymakers. The Forum mostly involves closed and off-the-record meetings, where participants can freely and seriously discuss critical issues. Mr. Daniel Wertz is currently the chair of NKEF and is leading the meetings. NKEF also organizes special conferences made public throughout the academic year. The Forum is made possible by a generous grant provided by the KDI School of Public Policy and Management.

*This event is on the record and open to the public.*