

**[KF Session] Exploring Young Generations' Future in International Exchange
Q & A session Form**

14:00–15:10 (KST) on November 12, in-person & online hybrid event

[Question 1] Could you please briefly introduce yourself, including your position and the major project(s) of which you are in charge, as well as basic information about your affiliation?

My name is NING Jie and I'm from China. I joined the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (한중일협력사무국 TCS) in October 2016, which is an international organization established in 2011 by the governments of China, Japan, and the ROK to promote trilateral cooperation in the political, economic, and socio-cultural areas. TCS has been widely involved in intergovernmental mechanisms among the three member states and provided service and support to the dialogues and cooperation efforts at various levels. By initiating and implementing cooperative projects in the areas of economy, cultural and people-to-people exchanges, public health, environment protection, disaster management and so on, TCS continues to drive the trilateral cooperation forward.

Before September 2021, I was Political Affairs Officer and provided support to trilateral mechanisms including trilateral foreign ministers' meeting, trilateral ministerial meeting on disaster management, as well as a series of track 2 exchanges among students and scholars of the three countries including the Network of Trilateral Cooperation Think-Tanks (NTCT). I am currently serving as Coordinator and Socio-Cultural Affairs Officer to facilitate the trilateral exchanges of education, culture, health, sports, and local governments, such as Trilateral Youth Summit, Young Ambassador Program, CAMPUS Asia alumni exchange, and Asia International Youth Film Festival.

[Question 2] Please briefly describe your career path, including your major and personal interests. It would be ideal if you could add the reason why you chose to or were chosen to be in the international exchange field, and whether there are any differences in your views toward the field from before and after you joined.

I obtained by masters' degree in Asian Studies from the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological University of Singapore in August 2016. My learning experiences in Singapore greatly extended my view of developing my future career and helped me better understand international exchanges. RSIS provided me with enormous opportunities to communicate with talented students and people in different fields including diplomats and IO staff. Also, during this period, I heard of TCS for the first time and started paying more attention to the work of IOs.

After joining TCS, my views of international exchanges have been further developed. To be honest, I was also curious and even doubtful about whether there were enough areas that could be cooperated considering the ups and downs of the relations among the three countries. But my

experiences of organizing or participating in relevant projects have helped me to be more confident about my work. Because a huge amount of people especially young people is very interested in each other. They are now studying in their neighboring countries, experiencing the culture there, and bring their own culture there. My work is trying to accumulate and spread these valuable and positive factors among the three countries.

[Question 3] Please share your “best moment” in this field. This can be a best practice, biggest achievement, most memorable moment, or even a lesson learned from failure, to be shared with young generations interested in a career related to international exchange.

The work of international exchange is the art of dealing with people with different cultural backgrounds. TCS colleagues are unique. The staff could travel together, climb mountains together and make friends with foreign colleagues. When it comes to the controversial issues among the three countries, we clearly know that we have different perspectives. But we still can work together smoothly.

[Question 4] What are the biggest changes or challenges you have confronted, including but not limited to the wake of the pandemic? How did you or your affiliated institution try to overcome this or turn it into an opportunity?

The efforts of accumulating positive factors among the three countries could be easily affected by negative news and mutual misperceptions. Since the media are the main channels for the people of the three countries to understand each other. More responsible and objective news reports of each other will be extremely significant for future trilateral cooperation. TCS is now strengthening its connections with the media and enhancing the exchanges among the journalists in order to introduce more positive developments rather than being misled by some irrational and nationalistic voices in the three countries.

[Questions 5] Please share your forecast on how the international exchange environment will change in the near future. What factors will affect or even rule the new landscape of the future?

Due to the ongoing pandemic and different national quarantine policies, the opportunities for face-to-face exchanges have been sharply reduced in the world. This new normal might last for years and will definitely affect face-to-face exchanges in the near future. But new forms of international exchanges are emerging as well during this period. Even though face-to-face exchanges could bring people together and experience the foreign culture on-site, the online platforms could reduce these negative influences of the pandemic by having more frequent and high-quality online exchanges.

[Questions 6] What do you see as the core role or value, or the ideal direction of international exchange? Would that change depending on the era and other variables, or would it stay the same regardless of external factors?

For me, mutual respect and sincere communication serve as the core roles of international exchange no matter how complicated the situation is. International exchange is the exchange among people with various cultural and educational backgrounds. Respecting each other and sincere communication especially when dealing with controversial issues should be more focused.

[Question 7] Please share one or two lessons or pieces of advices to give to young people dreaming of working in the international exchange field.

To be early prepared. If you are interested in international exchange or IOs, you need to start preparation as early as possible when you are a student. Relevant language skills especially English skills need to be strengthened. Besides, searching the opportunities of internship of different IOs according to your major and personal interests and experiencing the work of IOs by yourself as more as possible before making the final decision.