

EU-Republic of Korea Summit: building on a well-established partnership

Jean-Claude **Juncker**, President of the European Commission and Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, represented the European Union at the Summit. The Republic of Korea was represented by its President, Moon Jae-in. The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica **Mogherini** and EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström also participated, alongside several Ministers from the Republic of Korea.

*“In 2011, the EU agreed its first Free Trade Agreement with an Asian country. That country was the Republic of Korea”, said President Jean-Claude **Juncker**. “The beneficiaries of this agreement have been our citizens and our businesses, but if our trade relationship is to reach its full potential, we need to ensure that it is being implemented properly. At the same time, we must continue to dispel the notion that protectionism protects, continue to invest in multilateralism, and continue to increase our cooperation in sustainable development and the implementation of the Paris climate agreement. I am confident that in the years to come, our relations will be even more dynamic and our ties even stronger than now.”*

Presidents **Juncker**, Tusk and Moon committed to further develop the EU-Republic of Korea Strategic Partnership, which is underpinned by three concrete pillars: an enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement; an ambitious Free Trade Agreement; and a Framework Participation Agreement for EU crisis management operations. The Summit provided an opportunity to explore further areas for cooperation within the Strategic Partnership.

Discussions focused on the situation on the Korean Peninsula, the broader situation in the world, and trade relations. The Summit also provided an opportunity for the initialling, by the European Commission and the Republic of Korea, of a Horizontal Aviation agreement and the signing of a Joint Statement committing to work closely together to fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing.

Jointly addressing global challenges

The EU and Korea are united by common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The Leaders reaffirmed their strong commitment to multilateralism and the international rules-based order, politically and economically, while also supporting global action on climate change and the environment. The EU and Korea will continue promoting free, fair and rules-based trade, modernising the WTO-based multilateral trading system, and maintaining international cooperation against protectionism.

The Leaders discussed a number of pressing issues on the global agenda, chief

among them prospects for achieving lasting peace and security on a **Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons** and finding a comprehensive solution through diplomacy, while fully implementing the relevant UNSC Resolutions. The EU supports the Republic of Korea's efforts and diplomatic initiatives, in particular the three inter-Korean Summits and the US-DPRK Summit, and the implementation of their outcomes. The EU sees the development of inter-Korean relations, the denuclearisation of, and the establishment of a peace regime on the Korean Peninsula as vital for peace and security not only in East Asia, but for the entire world. In this context, the EU stressed the requirement for the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea** (DPRK) to completely, verifiably and irreversibly dismantle all its nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missiles and related programmes and facilities.

The EU and the Republic of Korea reiterated their commitment to maintaining close coordination on foreign and security issues. In the field of **crisis management**, the EU and the Republic of Korea will continue the good cooperation under the EU-Republic of Korea Framework Participation Agreement, through which the Republic of Korea has regularly contributed to the EU's naval counter-piracy operation off the coast of the Horn of Africa, EU NAVFOR Atalanta. Similarly, they discussed and agreed to cooperate more closely on implementing the 2030 Agenda for **Sustainable Development** and achieving its Sustainable Development Goals, and will bolster their bilateral policy dialogue on international development issues and promote joint cooperation in areas and third countries of mutual interest, notably in Asia and Africa.

Expanding the bilateral agenda to bring further benefits to citizens

The leaders recalled that the EU-Republic of Korea **Free Trade Agreement** has been an economic success that has increased wealth on both sides. The EU is Korea's 3rd largest trading partner and Korea the EU's 8th largest; annual trade in goods between the EU and Korea is now worth about €100 billion. With that in mind, the leaders exchanged views on how to ensure that our citizens and businesses can reap the full benefits of the agreement. The EU highlighted several important issues: for example, ensuring the full implementation of the long-standing, binding labour commitments under the Trade and Sustainable Development Chapter; opening the Korean market to EU beef from all EU Member States; and fully implementing commitments in the area of intellectual property rights, including protecting new Geographical Indications.

The Summit also provided an opportunity for the European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu **Vella**, and Kim Young-Choon, Minister for Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea [to sign a joint statement](#) committing to work closely together to fight against **Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing**. The Republic of Korea is the fourth country with whom the EU signs such a joint statement as part of its efforts to tackle the most serious threats to sustainable fishing and to marine biodiversity in the world's oceans, with devastating environmental and socio-economic consequences. The new partnership, in line with the objectives of the [EU's Ocean Governance strategy](#), will help exchange information about suspected Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated activities, enhance

traceability of fishery products and promote sustainable fishing through education and training.

Excellent progress has been made in the area of transport, where this week the European Commission and the Republic of Korea initialled a **Horizontal Aviation Agreement** on certain aspects of air services. The agreement will restore legal certainty to all 22 bilateral air services agreements that the Republic of Korea has with EU Member States by bringing these into conformity with EU law. The number of passengers travelling directly between the Republic of Korea and the EU has grown on average 10.1% over the past five years, totalling 3.4 million passengers in 2017. Currently, direct passenger flights are operated between 10 EU Member States and the Republic of Korea. The Horizontal Aviation Agreement reflects this growth in the EU-Republic of Korea aviation market and should serve as a catalyst for increased flows. More information is available [online](#).

Leaders also stressed their commitment to implementing the **Paris climate agreement**. To [translate this political commitment into concrete projects](#), the EU has set up a platform to exchange best practice on climate action and support the implementation of the Korean Government's Emissions Trading System (ETS) to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement. The EU's Partnership Instrument also financially supports exchanges of cultural practitioners and artists from both the EU and Korea, economic cooperation between companies, as well as the promotion of research and teaching on EU-related issues in Korea, adding to the overall breadth of the relationship.

Further Information

[EU-Republic of Korea Summit website](#)

[EU-Republic of Korea relations factsheet](#)

[Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Korea website](#)

[Support to the EU-Republic of Korea Strategic Partnership under the Partnership Instrument](#)