

**PARALLEL SESSION**

**MEGA CITIES: SEOUL SHARING**  
*Session organized by the Seoul Institute*



**Date:** 9 October 2014

**Time:** 11:30 am – 13:00 pm

**Venue:** TBD

**SESSION CONCEPT**

The number of megacities is increasing as the world is undergoing rapid urbanization on an unprecedented scale. While megacities embody the concentration of economic powers, they are also the source of major urban problems. Rapid urbanization is often linked to population explosion, housing shortages, traffic congestion, air and water pollution, and a generally lower quality of life for residents. The seriousness of such urban problems is growing in proportion to the megacities' expanding urban scale. Thus, the role and influence of its city governments to proactively deal with such challenges is also becoming increasingly important to ensure sustainable growth and well-being of its citizens. This is especially more pressing in Asian megacities as their urban populations are growing faster than ever.

Seoul has also dealt with such rapid urbanization in a very short period of time from the 1950s to 1990s but has grown into an exemplary city for innovative policies and sustainable urban growth in Asia. One of the key success points of Seoul was having long-term visions and implementation plans appropriate to its local characteristics. The Seoul Institute, established by the Seoul Metropolitan Government in 1992, had also played a vital role in providing such visions and implementation plans for Seoul. In this session, we plan to share some of the important agendas of Seoul today, regarding public safety, clean environment, and human friendly transportation and to share the policy solutions of those issues. Based on the experiences of Seoul, we would also like to advocate the important role of city-level think-tanks in megacities and enhanced collaboration among research institutions to provide better solutions.

Moreover, we ask cities of India to join Megacity Think-Tank Alliance (MeTTA), an international alliance of representative think-tanks of megacities. This Alliance was officially founded on July 7<sup>th</sup> 2014 by the collaboration of 5 megacity think-tanks in Asia including Seoul, Beijing, Shanghai, Singapore, and Ho Chi Minh City, with the support of ICLEI, CITYNET and Metropolis. We hope this alliance could provide creative and collaborative approaches in dealing with urban problems confronting megacities based on the mutual exchange of knowledge and urban experiences.

## PROGRAM

**Opening (10min):** Facilitator, Dr. Joonho KO, Director of Megacity Research Center, The Seoul Institute

## Presentations (60min)

### 1. The Seoul Master Plan for Safety Management: A New Comprehensive Framework for Safer Seoul

**- Speaker: Dr. Sang-Young SHIN**

Research Fellow, Department of Urban Safety & Environment, The Seoul Institute

**- Summary**

- In April 2014, Seoul Metropolitan Government first made the Seoul Master Plan for Safety Management as a medium-to-long-range comprehensive framework on urban safety management. The new plan gives emphasis on coordination among different hazards in charge of various sectors and a balance between structural and non-structural measures. Also, the plan reinforced citizen participation as well as different stakeholders.
- In order to make Seoul where every citizen felt safe, the plan set four core strategies: 1) strengthening preventive safety managements; 2) reinforcing disaster preparedness and response; 3) arranging complete recovery systems; and 4) securing an urban safety net through participation and communication. The presentation is going to introduce the background, process, and content of the plan, and discuss lessons learned and further issues over safety management in Seoul.

### 2. Seoul's Efforts to Tackle Air Pollution: Performance and Challenges

**- Speaker: Dr. Yu-Jin CHOI**

Research Fellow, Department of Urban Safety & Environment, The Seoul Institute

**- Summary**

- While Seoul has grown to one of the world's largest cities, the atmospheric environment of Seoul has undergone many different changes. In the 1970's and 1980's, SO<sub>2</sub> concentration in Seoul was four times higher than the Korean national air quality standard. Now SO<sub>2</sub> concentration in Seoul stays as low as a quarter of the national air quality standard. Though SO<sub>2</sub> is not an issue in Seoul any more, new air quality issues such as PM<sub>2.5</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub>, and ozone are plaguing Seoul.
- What had Seoul Metropolitan Government done to solve air quality issues such as SO<sub>2</sub> in the past? Currently, what kind of policies is the Seoul Metropolitan Government planning and implementing to tackle the new persistent issues of PM<sub>2.5</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub> and ozone? We will share Seoul's efforts to reduce the health risk associated with the air quality in the presentation.

### 3. Seoul Vision towards Human-Oriented Transportation Systems

**- Speaker: Dr. Joonho KO**

Director of Megacity Research Center, The Seoul Institute

**- Summary**

- Since the 1970's, following its urban development policy, Seoul Metropolitan Government has continuously constructed road network and public transportation infrastructure. Meanwhile, the number of vehicles increased due to high personal income followed by rapid economic development. The increased volume of traffic resulted in traffic congestion and other related urban problems. So far, the Seoul Metropolitan Government has carried out automobile-oriented traffic policies which only resulted in a vicious cycle of increased travel demand. As a result automobile-oriented policy became a risk factor for various urban problems such as disharmony among neighbors due to a lack of parking lots, air pollution, and an increase in traffic accidents.
- Learning from past repercussions, the Seoul Metropolitan Government shifted its predilection for automobile-preferential policies to human-oriented policies with the official announcement of the 'Seoul Transport Vision 2030'. 'Seoul Transport vision 2030' mainly features promoting walking, strengthening travel demand management, encouraging public transit use, adopting eco-friendly cars, and enhancing traffic safety. We expect this new human-oriented policy to reduce urban risk within Seoul's transportation sector.

### Open Discussion (20min): Role of Urban Think-Tanks for Better Society in Asian Megacities

**- Facilitator: Dr. Joonho KO**

Director of Megacity Research Center, The Seoul Institute

**- Discussion Points**

- What are the common dominators in dealing with policy making for megacities?
- How can city level think-tanks support their local government in addressing such issues?
- How do we make implementable policies which could both deal with current problems and also prepare for future challenges?
- How can megacity think-tanks work together in finding collaborative solutions?
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