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Building Peace through Art in the Koreas

Panel: Conflict Resolution 2

In 1953, the Korean War was settled in an Armistice Agreement, but what was boiling underneath the “truce” turned into a bitter relationship between North and South Korea. Resolving issues of conflict between the two countries is one of the most urgent tasks in developing a peaceful and sustainable Asia Pacific Community.

This paper looks at the role art has played in the history of the Korean conflict historically and contemporarily to provide constructive directions for the future. I will conduct a survey of art done internationally on the issue of the North and South Korean conflict and highlight projects that attempt to connect the two countries. I will demonstrate the beneficial role art can play in promoting peace and progress including on the issue of North Korean refugees. Even though the Koreas seem to be worlds apart, art is the beacon of light that shows hope is not lost.