

Meet Hyung-jong Lee

Introduction by David Woodward

I would like to welcome the new Consul General of the Republic of South Korea in Seattle, Hyung-jong Lee.

Hyung-jong arrived in Seattle two months ago from Seoul, Korea, where he recently served as the Director General for Environment and Climate Change. Hyung-jong was the Deputy Representative of Korea to the Paris Climate Change Conference in 2015. Both he and Rotary member Roberto Dondisch - who was leading the Mexican delegation to the Paris conference - met at the conference so they share expertise in climate change negotiations and are now reunited in Seattle!



Hyung-jong graduated from Korea's top university, Seoul National University, in the field of International Relations. During his last year at university he passed the stringent Ministry of Foreign Affairs qualification test and joined the Ministry in 1990 commencing his diplomatic career. Several years later Hyung-jong took the opportunity to further his education by going to Dublin, Ireland, where he earned a Masters in Economics at University College Dublin, known as "Ireland's Global University". Hopefully he had a chance to sample some Guinness while there.

Back in Seoul at the head office, it didn't take long for the Ministry to realize the value of his global perspective and mastery of economics. In 1996 Hyung-jong was posted to Paris to serve as Korea's representative in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Hyung-jong notes that he led a fairly "ordinary" life. I'm not sure how others define an "ordinary" life but Hyung-jong's globetrotting and strategic work in economics may not exactly qualify. His work took him from Paris to Tripoli, Libya, in 2000, back to Seoul in 2002, then back for a second term in Paris at the OECD from 2004 to 2006. Returning to Seoul in 2006, Hyung-jong became Director of International Economic Affairs for the Ministry. Three years later in 2009 during the global crisis, Hyung-jong was tapped a 3rd time to serve in Paris with the OECD as an economic counselor. In 2012 the Paris days were over and he was sent for the first time to Southeast Asia to serve in Korea's embassy in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, for two years.

Hyung-jong is married and has two kids, a daughter and a son who is currently doing his obligatory military service in Korea. He is an avid sports fan and loves golf, table tennis, and tennis.

Hyung-jong's vision for his service in the Pacific Northwest focusses on economic relations between the Northwest region and Korea. He is very interested in entrepreneurship and new ideas for economic development. Korea is moving aggressively from a manufacturing focus to a mixed economy and is preparing for what some experts are calling a "forced industrial

revolution”. While in Seattle Hyung-jong looks forward to meeting many Rotarians and encountering different talents and perspectives found here.

Welcome to Seattle Rotary Consul General Hyung-jong Lee!