

Oh Joon

Oh Joon is a professor of United Nations studies at Kyung Hee University in Seoul and a former ambassador of the Republic of Korea. He is also a visiting professor at the Korea Development Institute (KDI) School of Public Policy and Management in Sejong, Korea.

He was Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Korea to the United Nations in New York from 2013 to 2016. During this time, he served as the 71st President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and as President of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) for its 8th and 9th sessions in 2015 and 2016.

He was Ambassador of the Republic of Korea in Singapore from 2010-13 and Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Seoul from 2008-10. Since joining the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1978, he has held various positions, including Special Adviser to the Foreign Minister (2007-08); Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative at the Permanent Mission of Korea to the United Nations in New York (2005-07); Director-General for International Organizations in the Korean Foreign Ministry (2003-05); Minister at the Korean Embassy in Brazil (2002-03); Deputy Director-General for Policy Planning (1999-2001); Counselor at the Korean Embassy in Malaysia (1997-99); and Director of the United Nations Division (1995-97).

His other international activities include those as a member of the High Level Panel on the Future of Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) from 2016-17; a member of the Korea Agenda Council of the World Economic Forum (WEF) from 2010-13; the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) in 2006; and the Chair of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) from 2004-05.

Professor Oh is currently working with several civil society organizations on the rights of persons with disabilities both in Korea and internationally, including the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and Rehabilitation International (RI). Recently he served as an Honorary Ambassador for the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games held in March in Pyeongchang , Korea.

The ROK Government awarded him an Order of Service Merit twice, in 1996 and 2006. In 2014, he received the Youngsan Diplomat Award for his work on North Korean human rights issues. Rehabilitation International awarded him the Global Presidential Award in 2016 in acknowledgment for his achievements as President of CRPD. He published his first book in Korean “For Mica, Who Contemplates Life” in 2015.

He received a Master’s degree in International Policy Studies from Stanford University (1991-92); a diploma in International and Comparative Politics from the London School of Economics and Political Science (1982-83); and a Bachelor’s in French literature from Seoul National University (1974-78). He was also a visiting scholar at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University (1990-91).

Born in Seoul on 4 October 1955, he is married to Kim Miri with two children.