



# Tweede Kamer

DER STATEN-GENERAAL

## **Spreekpunten (fungerend) Voorzitter**

### **Tweede Kamer**

Bij de ontvangst van de president van Zuid-Korea, de heer Suk Yeol Yoonop  
woensdag 13 december 2023.

- Your Excellency, good morning and welcome to the Netherlands. I would like to acknowledge that this is the first time that a Korean president, since the start of our diplomatic relations in 1961, is visiting the Netherlands and, on behalf of the House of Representatives, I would like to warmly welcome you. After our recent elections, tomorrow, the House of Representatives will have a debate on the election of the new Speaker of the House. That is why I have the honour to be here today as the Acting Speaker. Also, I would like to introduce Mr Joris Thijssen, Acting Chair of the Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Committee of the House of Representatives.



- For several centuries now, the Netherlands and Korea have had strong ties. These ties have only grown stronger in recent years. As an example, I would like to highlight the visit of a delegation from the committee on Foreign Affairs of the House to the Republic of Korea in April of this year. I was part of that delegation and I would like to thank you for the warm welcome which we received in your country.
- In particular, I would like to mention a very special visit to the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan. As you know, the Netherlands was one of the countries that joined the UN-mission during the Korean War from 1950-1953. Unfortunately, 122 Dutch soldiers lost their lives during this mission, but we take pride in the knowledge that they served a noble cause. In the Memorial Cemetery, 117 Dutch soldiers have



been buried. The delegation, including myself, held a wreath laying ceremony in honour of these soldiers. I can personally say that it was a formal and very impressive moment and a reminder of our countries' shared history.

- The purpose of our visit in April was to gain a better understanding of the changing geopolitical security situation in the region. Current developments, such as the relations between your country and China, North-Korea, Russia, Japan and the United States as well as the recently concluded strategic partnership between the Netherlands and the Republic of Korea were discussed. The members of the committee were also deeply impressed with the visit to the Demilitarized Zone. They got a first-hand impression of the current security situation that the Republic of Korea is facing.



- Indeed, in 2022 our two countries agreed to elevate the bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership. This means that our current economic, strategic and security cooperation has been further strengthened. Regarding security, perhaps you could elaborate on the current security situation with regard to the recent launch of the North Korean spy satellite.
- During this visit of the Foreign Affairs committee of the House, the delegation also spoke about semi-conductors. I have heard that you visited ASML yesterday. ASML designs and builds systems and software used in the production of semiconductor chips used by businesses in the Republic of Korea. Perhaps you could share your takeaways of this meeting with us.



- Excellency, I am grateful for the opportunity to discuss these important topics with you today. Thank you again for taking the time in your busy schedule to visit your friends in the Netherlands and meet with us.

*Voor het geval dat de president vraagt naar de uitslag van de verkiezingen en de voortgang van de formatie:*

- In November of this year, the elections for the House of Representatives were held. After the elections, the leaders of the political groups negotiate which parties are to form a coalition government for the next four years. The formation of the coalition could take a while; last time it took nearly a year. Traditionally the biggest party is allowed to take the initiative in these negotiations. Currently that is the Party for Freedom, with 37 seats in the House.