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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Joint Statement of the second meeting of the European Union – Republic of Korea Digital Partnership Council

Delegations will find in the annex the Joint Statement of the second meeting of the European Union – Republic of Korea Digital Partnership Council.

**Joint Statement of the second meeting
of the European Union – Republic of Korea Digital Partnership Council
Brussels, 26 March 2024**

The second meeting of the European Union (EU) – Republic of Korea (ROK) Digital Partnership Council met in Brussels on 26 March 2024. The meeting was co-chaired by the European Commissioner for the Internal Market, Thierry **Breton** and the Korean Minister for Science and ICT (MSIT), Dr. **Lee Jong-Ho**.

The European Union and the Republic of Korea reaffirmed the central role of the Digital Partnership in advancing cooperation in digital emerging technologies which will unlock mutual benefits for their economies. The Partnership is based on the common vision for an inclusive and resilient digital transformation and a shared prosperity of digital society reflected in the European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles and the recently adopted Digital Bill of Rights of the Republic of Korea.

Both sides took stock of progress since the first EU-Republic of Korea Digital Partnership Council in Seoul (30 June 2023) and recognised that the Digital Partnership has already brought important outcomes in a short time and has the potential to become deeper and more dynamic.

Both sides welcomed the conclusion of negotiations on the agreement associating the Republic of Korea to Horizon Europe. The association of the Republic of Korea to Horizon Europe will facilitate collaborative research in key technology areas in support of the Digital Partnership by allowing entities of the Republic of Korea to participate in Horizon Europe on equal terms with entities of the European Union. This enhanced cooperation will significantly enhance the parties' capacity to deliver in on digital emerging technologies.

The following topics were discussed:

1. Semiconductors

Collaborative research and new EU-ROK Semiconductors Researchers' Forum

The European Union and the Republic of Korea jointly decided to cooperate on **collaborative research projects** in the fields of neuromorphic computing and heterogeneous integration. This will bring together EU and Korean Research and Innovation players, in particular research and technology organisations, universities and industrial technology providers. The projects will be selected following the procedures which both sides agree and are expected to start early in the second half of this year.

Both sides also launched a **Joint EU-Republic of Korea Semiconductors Researchers Forum** which will connect EU and Korean young researchers and will facilitate match-making for the partners involved in the collaborative research projects.

Semiconductors' supply chain

The European Union and the Republic of Korea confirmed the importance of exchanging information on the semiconductor's supply chain between MOTIE and DG CONNECT.

2. Beyond 5G/6G R&I cooperation

The European Union and the Republic of Korea have launched a **joint Research and Development call for proposals on collaborative research topics** targeting Radio Access Networks (RAN) and integrated device-network approaches demonstrating 6G technology. The EU side should endeavour to fund the projects with EUR 3 million (≈4 billion Won) in the context of the Smart Networks and Services Joint Undertaking and the Korean side with 3 billion Won (≈EUR 2 million). The projects are expected to start at the end of 2024. Moreover, both sides agreed to create further synergies in standardisation fora on the basis of their common vision for 6G.

3. Quantum

Following the establishment of the **EU-Republic of Korea Quantum Experts Group** on 29 June 2023 and as agreed at the first EU-Republic of Korea Digital Partnership Council, both sides have made progress in identifying common research topics in the field of quantum technologies, focusing so far on quantum simulators and quantum communications. The new **Republic of Korea-Europe Quantum Science and Technology Cooperation Centre** has contributed significantly to bilateral cooperation, by co-organising experts' workshops and promoting exchanges between industries, academia and research institutions from both sides.

At the second meeting of the Digital Partnership Council, both sides agreed to advance cooperation in **standardisation** of Quantum technology, to explore Quantum Research & Development collaboration and to exchange information about networking events.

4. Online digital platforms

Both sides decided to deepen their exchanges on respective legislation and other initiatives related to the online platform economy. Both sides expressed their commitment to the **Declaration for the Future of Internet** and could explore pursuing common outreach activities during RightsCon 25, an important summit on human rights in the digital age, which will be held in February 2025 in the Republic of Korea. Concerning Internet standards, both sides recognised the important role of the Internet Engineering Task Force as the competent Standards Development Organisation.

5. Artificial Intelligence

Both sides acknowledged that the permanent communication channel established under the EU-Republic of Korea Digital Partnership is important for fostering common approaches to the development of policy frameworks that ensure AI trustworthiness and innovation, including in the field of generative AI, taking into consideration international commitments and the legal frameworks of both sides such as EU AI Act and Korean AI Law. Both sides indicated that they would make efforts to exchange information on their positions for the **next AI Safety Summit** (May 2024) and the AI **Global Forum** to be hosted by the Republic of Korea in order to contribute to the global governance of AI and facilitate the uptake of trustworthy AI globally.

6. Cybersecurity

The Republic of Korea and the European Union expressed their intention to enhance information-sharing on the main cyber trends and could explore exchanges on respective cybersecurity research and capacity-building projects. Both sides will deepen synergies through more regular bilateral cybersecurity working-level interactions. The European Union and the Republic of Korea aspire to organise the next edition of the Cyber Dialogue to exchange information on respective policy developments and enhance common understanding of the evolving cybersecurity challenges.

7. Other areas of cooperation

- The European Union and the Republic of Korea indicated that they would cooperate regarding their positions in international ICT standardisation organisations such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).
- Both sides highlighted the economic and geostrategic importance of resilient and secure subsea cable connectivity projects through the Arctic that will provide resilient and trusted transnational data flows, and enhance opportunities for businesses.
- Both sides indicated that they envisage to organise in the coming months exchanges of experts through workshops and study visits to share success stories and best practices on SMEs digitalisation. To this end, the EU would make use of the network of European Digital Innovation Hubs which are one-stop shops funded by the EU's Digital Europe Programme to assist companies and public sector organisations in their adaptation to the digital age through training opportunities and technical expertise.

Next Digital Partnership Council meeting

The third meeting of the Digital Partnership Council is planned to take place in the first half of 2025 in Seoul.