Conference Report

ACGA

ACGA 24th Annual Conference

The Asia Corporate Governance Summit 2025

"From Compliance to Value Creation: A new era in Asia"

12-13 November 2025
Fairmont Ambassador Hotel, Seoul

Sponsoring Organisations:

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Supporting Organisations:

KRX · GF Korean Corporate Governance Forum · CFA Institute

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Preface

ACGA's 24th annual conference, held over 12-13 November 2025, was rebranded as "The Asia Corporate Governance Summit", a fitting title for the year's premier governance event across Asian markets. We returned to Seoul after our last conference there in 2013 amid dynamic developments in governance for both Korea and the broader Asia region. With the election bringing in a new President and cabinet just a few months earlier, CG reform has gained fresh momentum in recent months, and Korea was an apt market in which to hold the conference this year.

The conference theme was "From Compliance to Value Creation: A new era in Asia". We were delighted to have the Chair of the KOSPI 5000 Committee, Korean National Assembly MP Oh Gi-Hyoung give the opening keynote speech highlighting that the reform agenda of the new Korean government was at its early stages with various measures to strengthen shareholder value to come. The opening panel discussed Value Up style programmes across the region, with panellists from Japan's Financial Services Agency, China's Shenzhen Stock Exchange as well as the head of the Korea Exchange's Corporate Value Up team. ACGA sees this as an important development that regulators were looking to take corporate governance beyond compliance and guide companies to come forth with plans that focus on shareholder value. We held a follow-up workshop with market participants to discuss the effective implementation of these programmes among our investor members and an independent director of a leading Korean financial institution.

This year's conference featured seven plenaries and six workshops over two days. The panel discussions ranged from themes on AI, corruption and fraud, climate governance, geopolitics, the shift from public to private markets, and challenges for family-controlled companies. Meanwhile the six workshop sessions, in addition to discussing success factors for Value Up style initiatives, also covered activism in Asian markets, due diligence on supply chains, shareholder rights at AGMs, whistleblowing, diversity and human capital. Our gala dinner keynote speaker was the CEO of SM Entertainment, one of the largest listed entertainment companies in Korea, providing a spotlight on the development of K-culture and its global reach. In all, we had 62 speakers from 10 countries, offering first-hand practitioner insight for the 250 conference participants.

The support of our sponsors was invaluable for hosting the event. On behalf of ACGA and our members, we thank the following organisations for their generosity:

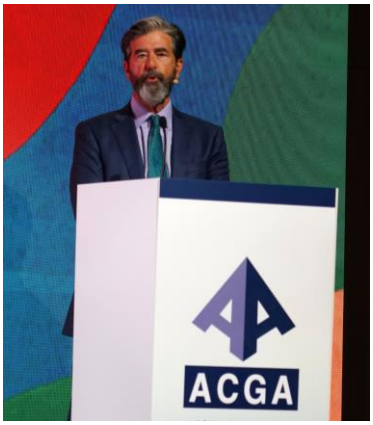
- **Marketing and Supporting Sponsors**: Samil PwC, Align Partners Capital Management Inc
- **Luncheon Sponsors**: Capital Group, Shinhan Financial Group
- **Workshop Sponsors**: CLP Holdings, CITIC CLSA

We are also grateful to Korea Exchange (KRX) for their role as a supporting organisation, the Korean Corporate Governance Forum for essential guidance, the CFA Institute for publicising the conference, as well as ACGA's Korea Working Group for inputs not just for the conference but also the ancillary member events held over the week. I would like to thank my colleagues at the ACGA Secretariat for the massive effort to bring this year's conference to a successful fruition. Our appreciation also goes to ACGA's Council for support, guidance and their active participation in the event.

The value of the conference comes from experience shared and insights offered to appreciate the challenges and consider potential solutions. We are deeply grateful for the frank views from our panellists and delegates. In the pages that follow, we provide highlights of the sessions. I trust it conveys a sense of the high value content in the discussions, supported by a common sense of purpose of the participants. We hope to see you all at next year's Asia Corporate Governance Summit!

Amar Gill
Secretary General
9 December 2025

Day 1



Keynote address

The 2025 ACGA annual summit opened with an address from **MP Oh Ki-Hyung**, Chair of the National Assembly's KOSPI 5000 Committee, who delivered a forward-leaning keynote outlining the ruling party's roadmap for capital market reform, aimed at achieving what he called a true "Korea premium." He confirmed that the ruling party intends to pass legislation mandating the cancellation of all treasury shares – both existing holdings and those newly repurchased – to end long-criticised practices that entrench controlling families and depress valuations. Looking ahead to 2026, he emphasised that Korea's Stewardship Code will be strengthened and actively enforced, alongside reforms to disclosure requirements, in support of a more transparent, accountable and investor-centred market. Framing these steps within the context of broader capital market reforms, MP Oh argued that Korea is entering a phase where bold, consistent legislative action, including further amendments to the Commercial Act, must be paired with greater responsibility from both companies and institutional investors to secure long-term growth and restore global confidence in the Korean market.

Plenary 1: Value Up programmes – an update from regulators (Japan, Korea, China)

The opening plenary panel provided updates from regulators on Value Up programmes in three key markets within the region. The speakers for the session were **Hiroshi Ozawa**, Chief Deputy Director from the Financial Services Agency (FSA) of Japan, **Jae Suk Yun**, Director General from Korea Exchange (KRX) and **Dr. Zhongbo Yu**, Deputy Director of the Research Institute at the Shenzhen Stock Exchange of China.

The panel was moderated by ACGA Secretary General, **Amar Gill**, who opened the session by discussing the findings of the ACGA Research Report, "Value Up, Asia." Specifically, the report found that public markets in the region face an existential issue fundamental to their purpose if they continue providing poor returns for investors and if issuers find them unattractive with higher valuations if listed abroad.

Hiroshi underscored that the Action Program launched by the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE) and Japan's Financial Services Agency (FSA) emphasised a shift within corporate governance from a compliance approach to an approach focused on value creation. The Japan Stewardship Code was updated this year to encourage collaborative engagement, while the CG Code is to be updated in 2026 with a likely emphasis on streamlining the CG code to promote a principles-based approach and the appropriate allocation of available business resources. He also highlighted that every year, the FSA and TSE work together to put forward updated versions of the Action Program to continually encourage companies to pursue these initiatives, reflecting discussions held by CG experts. Hiroshi agreed that there was room to improve the quality of directors, including having relevant expertise to contribute effectively on company boards.

Jae Suk emphasized that the Value Up initiative in Korea placed greater responsibility on the board of directors, including approval of management's Value Up plans and for the C-suite to participate in investor relations activities and interact with shareholders. Regulators have sought for companies to

voluntarily join in the initiative to reflect a more genuine commitment. The approach was to have a 'naming policy' for good companies rather than a shaming policy. A Value Up index has been launched with 13 ETFs and similar products tracking it, outperforming the overall KOSPI index by 9% YTD. Policy makers are looking to impose separate taxation on dividend income tax from comprehensive income tax and reduce the tax on dividends in Korea from 45% to 25% which would bring it lower than the level of income tax and hence encourage companies to pay out more dividends that will benefit their shareholders. However, Jae Suk emphasized that the objectives of Value Up are not just focused on shareholder returns, but also seek to improve the long-term prospects of a given company.

Zhongbo discussed how the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) have issued guidelines that require certain companies to take action to improve their valuation. These guidelines direct constituents of the main indices as well as other companies trading below book value for over a year to introduce measures including explicit dividend policies and initiating share buybacks. The CSRC will take regulatory action against relevant companies that do not comply while listing standards will also be strengthened to attract better companies. Meanwhile delisting criteria are becoming more stringent – for instance, companies with consecutive negative auditor opinions will be de-listed. The overall aim of the reform efforts is to bring more long-term capital into the markets with better quality companies to invest in.

While the Market Value Management initiative in China was launched about a year ago one of the audience members pointed out that it does not appear to be well known internationally. Large companies making these plans more explicit will likely increase awareness. Meanwhile, the speakers emphasised ongoing initiatives in Japan and Korea to maintain the momentum for companies to put greater focus on value creation.

Plenary 2: AI and cyber-risk – navigating the new frontier in corporate governance

The panel convened experts from Singapore, South Korea and the UK to discuss AI adoption, governance, risk management and emerging regulatory approaches across Asia. Moderated by **Mary Leung**, Senior Advisor on Capital Markets Policy, Asia Pacific, CFA Institute, Hong Kong, the panel, including **Michael Tang** , Head of Listing Compliance, Singapore Exchange Regulation, **Ross Terverson**, Regional Team Lead, Asia and Global Emerging Markets, EOS at Federated Hermes, London, **Dr. Soonmin Bae**, Chief Responsible AI Officer, KT AI Future Lab, Seoul and **Hyunchul Park**, Risk Services Leader, Risk & Cyber, PwC Consulting, Seoul, examined the transformative impact of artificial intelligence (AI) and escalating cyber-risks from the perspective of governance.

Panellists discussed the risks associated with AI models, identifying two primary risk categories: model risk, encompassing explainability, transparency and rigorous testing, and broader governance risk. Ethical challenges such as algorithmic bias and vulnerabilities to prompt-injection attacks were highlighted as growing concerns. Cybersecurity was identified as a critical new frontier, with generative and particularly agentic AI expanding the attack surface across both traditional IT systems and operational technology such as power grids and manufacturing networks. Boards were advised to discuss cybersecurity at nearly every meeting, seek independent expertise, run tabletop exercises for low-probability but high-impact scenarios and treat security spending as a continuous investment rather than a one-off cost.

Participants from South Korea underscored the country's operational integration of AI. KT Corporation, a leading telecommunications provider, runs one of the world's largest AI-powered contact centres and has developed its own family of sovereign large language models. To address emerging risks, KT established a dedicated Responsible AI Centre in 2024. The centre is structured around the core pillars of accountability, sustainability, transparency, reliability and inclusivity. Governance is exercised through internal ethics committees, external advisory boards and end-to-end processes ranging from data quality assurance and bias mitigation to enterprise-wide AI literacy and training programmes.

On the regulatory front, South Korea's Framework Act on Artificial Intelligence, often referred to as the AI Basic Act, was promulgated in January 2025 and will be effective from 22 January 2026. Unlike the EU AI Act's four-tier risk pyramid, it focuses on "high-impact AI" systems that could impact physical safety, critical infrastructure, finance, healthcare, or fundamental rights. Korean financial and market supervisors are piloting large language models to assist in reviewing listed companies' annual reports and disclosure documents, signalling AI's growing role in regulatory oversight itself.

The audience heard that in Singapore, the broader digital economy – of which AI is becoming a key driver – contributed approximately 18% to GDP in 2024, with the majority of enterprise AI deployments still concentrated on improving IT efficiency, process automation, and customer service. Singapore continues to pursue an industry-led approach with sector-specific standards developed alongside regulators. Its flagship frameworks, including the Model AI Governance Framework (updated for generative AI in May 2024) and the AI Verify testing toolkit are aligned with international standards such as ISO/IEC 42001 and 5338. Companies are encouraged to maintain human-in-the-loop or human-over-the-loop oversight for higher-risk applications and to clearly disclose when AI influences decisions.

During the discussion, responsible AI was likened to a very fast sports car – thrilling but highly dangerous without effective brakes in the form of strong governance, testing, measurement, employee training, and transparent reporting. Companies were cautioned against rushing blindly into AI and urged to align capital-intensive investments such as GPU data centres with realistic utilisation and depreciation timelines with robust downside protection and stakeholder trust should be viewed as genuine sources of competitive advantage rather than mere compliance obligations.

Workshop 1: AGMs and proxy advisors

The AGM and Proxy Advisory Workshop was moderated by **Stephanie Lin**, ACGA Research Head for Korea and Singapore, and featured **Dr. Hyunyoung Hwang**, Research Fellow at the Korea Capital Market Institute (KCMI); **Jaewook Baek**, CEO of the Daishin Economic Research Institute; and **Sara Lee**, Director of Responsible Investment & Stewardship at APG Asset Management Asia. Stephanie opened the session with an overview of ACGA's long-standing work on AGMs and proxy voting across Asia. She highlighted that since 2006, ACGA has advocated for stronger proxy voting systems, conducted regional surveys, and examined the rise of hybrid and virtual AGMs during the pandemic. In recent years, there has been particular focus on Korea, where ACGA leads an annual delegation of global institutional investors during the March proxy season to observe AGMs firsthand. While some

improvements are underway challenges remain, including late AGM notices, limited disclosures, and the extreme clustering of meeting dates.

Dr. Hyunyoung Hwang highlighted several structural issues in Korea's AGM system. She noted the persistent concentration of AGM dates around a single "peak day," which limits investor participation and strains proxy advisors' capacity. Delays in disclosing key AGM materials including business reports, audit reports, and meeting notices, leave investors minimal time to review agenda items. Dr. Hwang also discussed the unresolved "blind dividend" issue, where companies set record dates for dividends before approval, undermining shareholder decision-making. On executive compensation, he observed frequent divergences between approved limits and actual payouts, highlighting a gap between disclosed governance frameworks and practice.

Despite these issues Dr. Hwang noted encouraging signs of change, including a surge in retail investor participation and rising adoption of the Stewardship Code among institutional investors. She concluded by outlining the major amendments to the Commercial Act taking effect in 2025, which aim to address several of the structural problems she identified. These reform measures include introducing fiduciary duties of directors to shareholders, requiring at least one-third independent directors, strengthening the 3% voting cap for audit committee elections, mandating electronic AGMs for large companies, prohibiting exemptions from cumulative voting, and expanding separate audit committee elections. Additional proposals – such as mandatory cancellation and fairer disposal of treasury shares – signal continued momentum toward improving Korea's AGM environment. Dr. Hwang expressed cautious optimism that these regulatory changes, coupled with evolving investor expectations could gradually shift Korea's AGM system toward greater transparency, fairness, and accountability.

Jaewook Baek emphasized that Korea's capital market is undergoing a shift toward greater governance and investor engagement. He noted that 2025 stock market gains increasingly reflect governance signals, not just earnings. To redefine the AGM, he argued, all stakeholders – companies, shareholders, proxy advisors, and regulators – must treat it as a platform for transparent, two-way communication. Companies should communicate clearly, shareholders actively participate, proxy advisors facilitate dialogue, and regulators enable effective frameworks. Strengthening disclosures, investor events, and proxy advisor guidance is critical to fostering meaningful engagement. Baek envisioned AGMs evolving from monologues into interactive dialogues, potentially becoming celebratory gatherings similar to those held by Berkshire Hathaway.

Sara Lee shared her experience attending AGMs in Korea and other markets, highlighting structural challenges that affect foreign investors. She noted hurdles such as authentication requirements, late AGM notices, limited time to vote, and the frequent absence of board directors at AGMs, which contrasts with global expectations that boards answer shareholder questions. However, she expressed optimism about recent amendments to Korea's Commercial Code, passed in July and August, which strengthen directors' fiduciary duties and could encourage independent directors to engage more actively with shareholders at AGMs.

Together, the speakers highlighted both the progress and ongoing challenges in Korea's AGM landscape. They emphasized that meaningful change will require not only regulatory reforms but also a cultural shift among companies, investors, and advisors – transforming AGMs from procedural obligations into genuine opportunities for dialogue, transparency, and long-term shareholder value.

Workshop 2: Value up – What does it take to work

This workshop session provided a bottom-up perspective on corporate governance reforms through Value-up programmes in Asia, in contrast with the top-down regulatory updates shared presented in the opening plenary panel by representatives from regulators in Japan, Korea and China. The session featured **Aya Fujiki**, ESG Stewardship Manager at Capital Group (Tokyo), **Fujia Liu**, Senior Equity Product Strategist at E-Fund Management (Guangzhou) and **Su Sang Yoon**, Investment Stewardship Specialist at J.P. Morgan Asset Management (Hong Kong), and chair of ACGA's Korea Working Group. **Su Keun Kwak**, Independent Director at Shinhan Financial Group (Seoul) provided insights from the corporate perspective. The panel was moderated by **Helena Fung**, Head of Research and Advocacy at ACGA.

The panel opened with a brief overview of regional Value Up-style initiatives and recommendations from ACGA's comprehensive report, published in May. The panellists then discussed the relative success of governance reform programmes, noting that regional initiatives were at different stages of implementation and emphasising the significance of corporate disclosures and valuation and profitability ratios as critical for true evaluation. From the corporate viewpoint, Su Kuen detailed the changes Shinhan Financial Group has made in implementing its own Value-up programme, underscoring the board's pivotal role in strategy and positive feedback received from shareholders.

Cultural and regional factors were explored, including the concept of "carrots and sticks" set out by regulators in different regions, including Korea's 'Value up' index, The Tokyo Stock Exchange's (TSE) evaluation of disclosures and access to the Premium Market segment. Challenges included adapting policies to local contexts for effective incentives. On translating policies into action, the group stressed enhanced governance frameworks and performance metrics, while addressing board skill gaps – particularly in prioritizing shareholder value – and strategies including training and board evaluations. Kwak recounted operational hurdles and mindset shifts at Shinhan. Institutional investors' roles were regarded as central to the ongoing progress of reforms, with calls for stewardship to ensure substance over form and fostering long-term value over short-termism. Market-wide reforms, such as stronger governance codes and investor protections, were deemed essential.

The discussion also revealed challenges, including cultural limitations on independent directors' ability to influence management compensation, elusive KPIs for board effectiveness, potentially inconsistent signals on policy direction and Korea's shallow pool of qualified directors. Overall, the panel recommended improved communication, transparency, and tailored incentives to drive meaningful reforms, urging collaboration between investors and corporates for sustainable value creation.

Workship 3: Activism – Challenges in Asian markets

The workshop was moderated by **Dr. Woochan Kim**, Professor of Finance at Korea University Business School and featured **Changhwan Lee**, Founder, CEO and CIO of Align Partners Capital Management Inc., **Naoko Ueno**, VP of Asian Research & Engagement at Glass Lewis Japan GK and **Seth H. Fischer**, Founder & Chief Investment Officer at Oasis Management.

The audience heard that shareholder activism is growing in major Asian markets, especially in Japan and South Korea, but still faces cultural and structural hurdles. This workshop also highlighted key insights useful for ACGA advocacy and delegates.



Legal and regulatory changes in South Korea, such as expanding directors' loyalty duties, mandatory cumulative voting, and 3% caps on family voting power for electing Audit committee members, are helping minority shareholders. However, controlling families, or chaebols still dominate listed companies through complex shareholdings, hindering real change. Family control remains common across Asia with varied levels of ownership concentration. Legal reforms were discussed as needing strengthening, especially regarding shareholder litigation rights.

Voting and engagement are crucial. Although retail investors in Korea are active, AGM voting rates are low. Electronic voting and proxy systems can increase turnout but may also reinforce family control if not used widely. The stewardship roles of Japan's GPIF and Korea's NPS were discussed. GPIF's leadership drives stewardship activity and disclosure across asset managers, while NPS retains voting rights even for allocated capital.

The audience heard that board independence has improved but challenges persist. Boards often rely too much on academics and lack professional training. The group stressed that true independence requires relevant skills, and ongoing education - especially on new issues like AI - should be mandatory.

Recommendations to strengthen Asian activism include focusing on practical legal remedies for shareholder rights, enhancing director training with clear skill requirements, tailoring voting rules for family-run companies, promoting accessible and fair electronic voting, and encouraging public pension funds to lead strong stewardship efforts, inspired by Japan's example.

Plenary 3: Corruption and fraud – role of audit committees

The session on "Corruption and fraud – role of audit committees," moderated by **Ronnie Lim**, Senior Engagement Specialist at Robeco and an ACGA Council Member, explored evolving governance challenges and reforms in the Asian corporate landscape. Panellists, including **Hyung-koon Kim**, Head of Special Situations at Tcha Partners, **Hetal Dalal**, President and COO of IiAS in Mumbai, **Dr. Woojin Kim**, Professor of Finance at Seoul National University and **Jae Aum**, Partner, Capital Markets, at EY Han Young in Seoul, highlighted the shift toward stronger oversight amid persistent issues such as tunnelling and fraud, drawing from post-1997 Asian Financial Crisis reforms that introduced U.S.-style audit committees to replace the prior German-inspired system.

A core challenge cited by the panel in uncovering corporate corruption was the ability for investors to be able to interpret management's intentions behind transactions, compounded by the influx of academics onto boards who may prioritise relationships over practical skillsets. Independence – both

factual and perceptual – remains paramount, alongside the need for directors to possess deep domain knowledge. Panellists noted that companies now routinely conduct risk assessments and that these outputs are increasingly scrutinised by audit committees and boards, fostering more robust discussions.

In Korea's chaebol-dominated corporate landscape, it was noted that controlling shareholders may exploit minority interests through tunnelling (for example, using self-dealing transactions such as inflated royalty payments). Unlike wholly owned subsidiaries that are typical in the US, both Korean holding and subsidiary companies are often publicly traded, which amplifies potential conflicts of interest. With just 20-30% ownership enabling control in Korea (in contrast to 50% in many other markets) true independence is regarded as elusive, as family-aligned nominees may dominate board recommendations.

The panel weighed the impact of recent reforms in Korea, noting that for large firms, audit committees will be required to comprise at least directors with majority independence, a move which should enhance their ability to impact corporate practices. Smaller entities will continue to rely on statutory auditors which lack board status. As a result, larger firms gain stronger governance tools, while smaller ones may lag, heightening fraud vulnerabilities in family-controlled mid-sized entities. Panellists advocated leveraging auditors and committees to align controlling and minority interests, citing the continuing risk of fraud in mid-sized companies.

The revisions to the Korean Commercial Code address a loophole in the 3% aggregate voting cap for electing audit committee members. Previously, the cap applied only to the appointment of inside directors as audit committee members allowing controlling shareholders to bypass it by nominating and electing a majority of compliant independent directors for the remaining seats (recently extended from one to at least two), thereby "stacking" the committee with compliant directors. The recent amendments expand the 3% voting cap uniformly to all audit committee member elections, including outside directors, thereby curbing controller dominance. The universal importance of having independent directors on audit committees was underscored by all panellists, and the need for internal auditors and external auditors to be equally integrated into the audit process was also highlighted.

The audience heard that expertise scarcity persists and that it is not uncommon for nominally detached independent directors to be in fact linked to the founding families. However, the recent

extension of directors' fiduciary duty in Korea to include shareholders means that boards now face extended accountability, a move which may prompt greater caution among potential director candidates. Positive shifts include appointing foreign-experienced professionals and renaming "outside directors" to "independent", a small but important change which underlines their role. Dr. Kim reported behavioural changes on several boards in the wake of governance revisions. Enforcement and natural evolution are expected to drive transparency, though legacy influences are considered likely to slow progress. With regards to the Value Up programme, it was noted that Korea lacks KPIs similar to Japan's 8% ROE soft target, evaluation mechanisms and clear guidance on penalties for non-compliance. Panellists urged regulators to provide more tailored guidance: "Show us what to do, and we'll deliver."

In sum, the panel noted that corporate Korea is cautiously advancing, but best practices remain rare and vectors for corruption and fraud remain. Full realisation of Korea's Value Up ambitions hinges on empowering minorities and fostering genuine expertise.

Plenary 4: The trillion-dollar asset shift – governance strategies for Asia's public and private markets

The final afternoon session on Day One was moderated by **Namuh Rhee**, Chair of the Korean Corporate Governance Forum (KCGF). The panel included **Hitoshi Hirokawa**, Managing Director of ESG & Stewardship Department at the Government Pension Investment Fund (GPIF); **Seung Keun Lee,** Team Leader of Corporate Governance Team 1 at the National Pension Service Investment Management (NPS); **Siok Lan Pek**, Head of Investment Stewardship at Temasek; and **Andrew Hendry**, CEO Asia and Head of Asia Client Group at Janus Henderson Investors.

The discussion opened with Hitoshi, Seung Keun and Siok Lan outlining their organisations' asset compositions. On private market exposure, GPIF has increased its allocation, though still small and capped at 5% of AUM. NPS dedicates a larger share to alternatives, including private equity, real estate and infrastructure. Temasek also has a high proportion of private assets, reflecting its origins as an organisation that invests in and owns companies. Meanwhile, Andrew shared observations from an asset manager's perspective, highlighting a growing appetite for European assets, a moderate return of capital to China, and rising interest from asset owners in private credit.

Namuh then guided the conversation towards how governance frameworks apply across public and private markets. Seung Keun explained that NPS has not yet explicitly extended its responsible investment framework to private assets, but the upcoming revision to Korea's stewardship code could broaden its scope to include them. Hitoshi pointed out the differences between the engagement models in public and private markets, because in the former institutional investors are generally

minority shareholders, while in the latter the funds often act as significant or controlling shareholders, enabling deeper involvement and oversight of investee companies.

At Temasek, Siok Lan described governance across public and private holdings as grounded in the same fundamental principles, with the flexibility to engage deeper where needed. In public markets, the firm engages as a shareholder, focusing on financial returns, resilience and board quality. In private markets, the firm can be more hands-on, either through strong GP partnership or directly holding board seats. Additionally, she highlighted a key challenge for listed company boards: balancing risk oversight with value creation.

Andrew noted that while core governance principles – such as transparency, fraud prevention, and respect for human rights – are consistent across public and private markets, their execution differs. Private markets allow more intimate access to investee companies and more direct board influence, reflecting a heightened need for trust, especially at this stage of the cycle. In public markets, the key challenge is aligning the interests of the board and shareholders to enable directors to challenge management effectively on risk management and value creation.

During the Q&A, an audience member asked the speakers to name the most important governance safeguard for investor protection. Siok Lan emphasised the role of an effective board; Andrew pointed to liability for directors and executives as a strong deterrent, and Seung Keun stressed the alignment of interests between CEO and shareholders.

Gala Dinner

The keynote speaker for the gala dinner was Daniel Jang, Chief Executive Officer of SM Entertainment. He spoke on the origins of K-Pop and production systems, expounding on how the focus on deep interaction with fans has led to the massive growth of committed communities who identify with their entertainment stars and built momentum globally. He also provided an overview of the current scale of the K-Pop industry, leading to various other listed entertainment companies in the market. SM Entertainment had its share of corporate manoeuvring and Daniel explained how he came into the role of CEO following changes brought by a leading domestic activist investor, Align Partners.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Day 2

Day 2 opening

Plenary 1: Climate governance and transition strategies – East vs. West

The first session on Day Two offered a comparative lens on climate governance. Moderated by Charles Nguyen, Head of Asia ESG Investing at Neuberger Berman, the panel featured **Jeanne Stampe**, Lead Policy Advisor at Norges Bank Investment Management; **Sunita Rajakumar**, Founder of Climate Governance Malaysia; **Dr. Joon Hyug Chung,** Associate Professor at the Seoul National University School of Law; and **Seongbong Cho**, VP and Head of ESG at SK Hynix.

Charles began by asking the speakers for their perspectives on climate regulation and governance. Dr. Chung outlined Korea's evolving sustainability regulation, noting that ISSB standards have not yet been adopted domestically, though alignment could come soon. He also flagged the rise of shareholder activism as a double-edged sword for sustainability, given the short-term horizons of many retail shareholders.

Jeanne drew contrasts between East and West. Europe leans towards more prescriptive disclosures and use of capital charges to penalise higher emissions, while Asian markets such as Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong are advancing ISSB-aligned, investor focused disclosures and favouring supportive mechanisms for forward-looking transition plans and technologies.

Sunita underscored Asia's rapid move to mandate ISSB-aligned reporting standards, using disclosure as a primary lever to address systemic climate risks. She also stressed the importance of building the broader ecosystem: professionalise sustainability roles, scale assurance capacity and update liability regimes for forward-looking statements.

When discussing catalysts for change, Dr. Chung highlighted supply-chain pressures as more impactful than shareholder influence in Korea. Given the concentrated ownership structures, demands from suppliers can be more effective in driving sustainability outcomes.

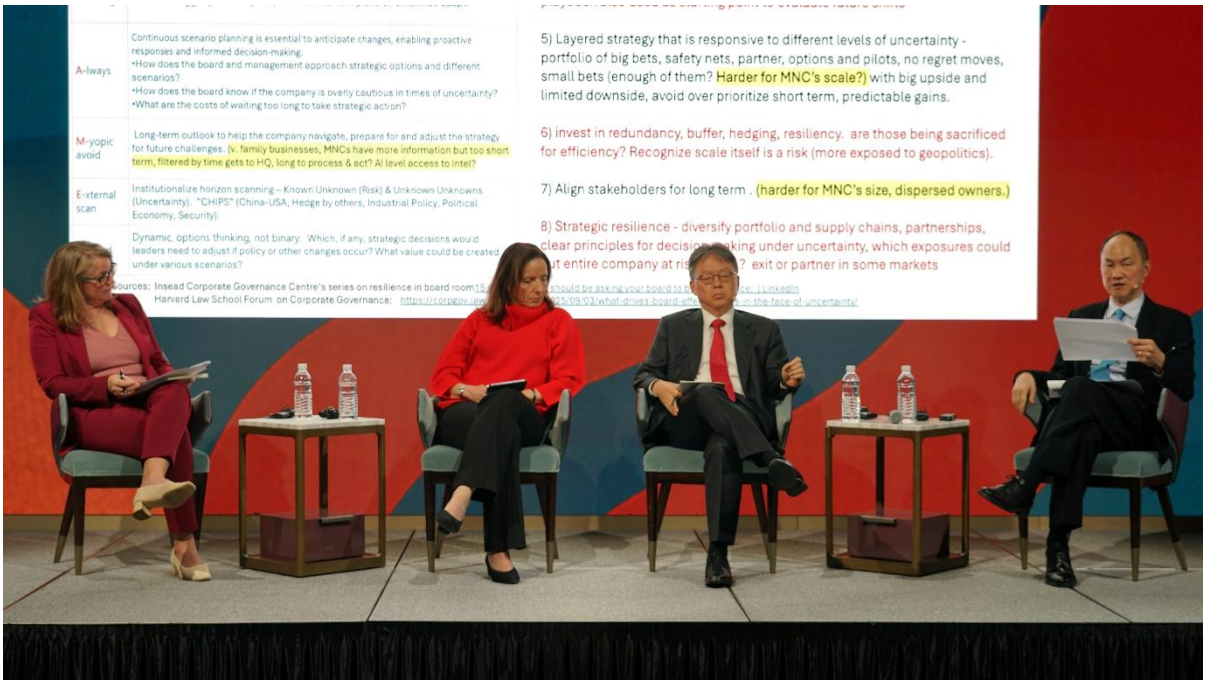
As the conversation shifted to resilience and adaptation, Jeanne emphasised the importance of disciplined capital allocation: companies should invest in decarbonisation and other projects only when useful life and utilisation assumptions remain robust under rising physical risks. Sunita urged boards and C-suites to prioritise adaptation strategically, citing the growing complexity of climate models, the erosion of in-house judgement from outsourcing, and a widening assurance gap. Offering a corporate perspective, Seongbong highlighted SK Hynix's ESG division under board oversight, alongside adaptation measures such as securing renewable energy and expanding industrial water reuse.

The session closed with a focus on boards' fiduciary duties and competencies. Dr. Chung framed sustainability as integral to directors' fiduciary duties, with the practical challenge of proving breaches and imposing liability given judicial deference to board discretion. Jeanne, Sunita and Charles all stressed the need for boards to deepen climate-relevant skill sets and commit to ongoing director training. As Sunita noted, training should go beyond mere subject-matter updates to cultivate a way of thinking that blends strategic foresight with critical reasoning.

Plenary 2: Geopolitics – Challenges to Boards

This panel discussion was moderated by **Jennifer Coulson**, Senior Managing Director & Global Head for ESG at British Columbia Investment Management Corporation (BCI) from Canada. The speakers for the session were **Karine Hirn**, Partner and Chief Sustainability Officer at East Capital Group, based in Hong Kong and an independent director of a UK-listed banking group; **Young Sun Kwon**, Chief Economist and Head of Research at Woori Finance Research Institute, and **Yuelin Yang**, ACGA Council member, member of the Pacific Pension & Investment Institute (PPI) and an independent director on various boards.

The opening remarks for the session underscored how in the past geopolitical issues were delegated to the C-suite to handle but that boards have had to become more involved, with geopolitical literacy becoming required learning for company directors. Young Sun emphasized how geopolitical factors can have real economic effects. The Korean won, for instance, is in a similar place to where it was during the Asian Financial and the Global Financial Crisis, even though the economy is in a much stronger position. Geopolitical concerns have put pressure on the currency, benefiting exporters while having a negative impact on domestic businesses.



Yuelin emphasized the key difference between risk and uncertainty. Geopolitics is an unknown unknown – a 'pure' uncertainty rather risk that can be forecast. In his view, the role of the board is to be a shock absorber for uncertainty. Boards need to prepare for scenarios rather than trying to predict events. As a framework to identify the issues, Yuelin provided several acronyms including the **SEARCH** approach: **S**urfing strategy for uncertainty, **E**xternally oriented, **A**I-focused, **R**egionalising networks of units, **C**limate remaining a key focus and **H**istorically minded as the further we can look back the further we can look forward.

Karine emphasized boards need to have as a very minimum one person with an international background involving professional experience in different markets. Directors need to develop geopolitical understanding just as they need to develop an understanding of other different areas of

board responsibility. Young Sun underscored the need for on-the-ground knowledge and discussions with local experts. Questions from the audience pivoted to the risk in the Korean peninsula from the North. While it appears that there is a status quo with some potential national security risks for the South, the panel responded that this risk now seems subsumed under other global issues including Taiwan, the Middle East and Ukraine. There is, as one speaker noted, a risk of complacency for which boards need to always be geopolitically alert.

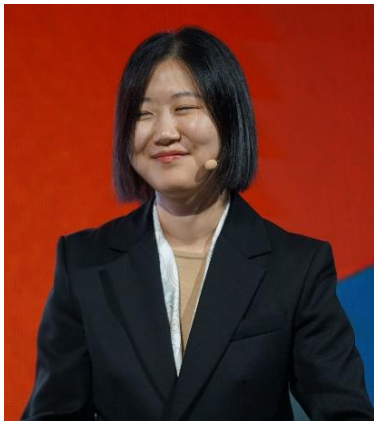
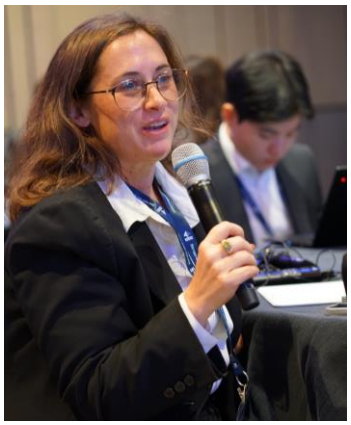
Workshop 1: Whistleblowing and Corporate Governance Red Flags

Anuja Agarwal, Research Head, Japan and India of ACGA served as the moderator for this workshop, while **Hyun Ju Ku**, Partner Attorney at Hannuri Law LLC, **Jae-Wook Lim**, Partner, Forensic Services at Samil PwC and **Trista Chen**, Co-lead, Global Investment Stewardship at L&G were the panel speakers.

The workshop emphasised the importance of whistleblowing as a crucial corporate governance mechanism that affects all stakeholders including boards, investors, employees, regulators, and more broadly society. Despite its importance in detecting fraud and misconduct (with data showing 43% of occupational frauds detected through tip-offs), many jurisdictions face challenges making whistleblowing effective.

South Korea's comprehensive whistleblower protection law, enacted in 2011, includes rewards for disclosures that benefit the public; however, the compensation amount is regarded as too small to make up for loss of salary. Cultural barriers also remain a significant deterrent in Asia. Whistleblowing is often stigmatised and whistleblowers face serious risks like job loss or social ostracization, discouraging those who may wish to come forward from doing so.

Effective whistleblowing mechanisms often require external third-party channels independent of management as many companies lack employee trust in internal processes. Global investors increasingly expect companies to have accessible whistleblower policies covering employees and the supply chain, with oversight ideally by independent audit committees. Investors use whistleblowing case handling as a factor in stewardship and voting decisions, sometimes voting against board members in cases where issues are ignored.

Differences across jurisdictions are influenced by legal protections, corporate culture, political environment, and enforcement. For example, Japan's hierarchical work culture and Singapore's centralised governance impact whistleblowing practices differently. In Korea, despite strong legal protections, practical application often lags and cultural resistance persists.

Panellists highlighted the importance of psychological safety, the tone set top-down by corporate leadership, transparency in handling reports and ongoing training. Cases such as Satyam in India and Olympus in Japan show how whistleblowing has been instrumental in driving regulatory reforms. Investors assess both the quantity and quality of whistleblowing reports, noting that zero reports often signals problems, but verification of data through on-the-ground resources is necessary.

Key red flags in companies were deemed to include lack of segregation of duties and organisational wrongdoing. Companies are encouraged to build trust through clear policies, confidentiality assurances, and third-party escalation channels.

Overall, whistleblowing effectiveness hinges on a complex interplay of legal frameworks, cultural change, corporate governance reforms, investor pressure, and operational mechanisms that ensure anonymity, protection, and follow-through on reports.

Workshop 2: Realignment of Supply Chains, Due Diligence and their Pressure Points

This workshop, moderated by **Christopher Leahy**, ACGA's Specialist Advisor for Southeast Asia, explored how companies can redesign for resilience, how boards should oversee risks, and how evolving due diligence can help reveal pressure points. Speakers for this workshop included **Erika Rodriguez**, Head of Sustainability in APAC for KKR, **Flora Wang**, Head of Stewardship at Fidelity International and **Youngdae Kwon** Advanced Strategy Consulting Leader at EY Han Young.

Panellists stressed the criticality of pre-investment due diligence to evaluate supply chain vulnerabilities, and highlighted risks in resource and labour-intensive industries. Internal experts and external advisors were noted as essential for assessing risks. A framework for evaluating risks was discussed, emphasizing material concentrations, technology dependencies, and external shock probabilities such as regulatory changes. Disruptions to revenue and cost impacts were highlighted, alongside scenario analysis to quantify vulnerabilities.

Some common blind spots discussed include geopolitical risks, digital asset dependencies, and talent gaps. Reshoring challenges were discussed, particularly for firms in smaller domestic markets reliant on global positioning amid tariff policies and market turmoil. Diversification feasibility, such as exiting

major hubs or adopting plus one strategies was debated, with an eye for balancing environmental/social costs against shifts from just-in-time to just-in-case models.

The impact of climate risks was also discussed, with one example being that of flooding calamities disrupting local operations in the Philippines. Third-party tools were emphasized as key for aiding pre-investment assessments, while the importance of resilience measure for exposed assets. Panellists warned of climate related risks becoming potentially uninsurable.

AI's increasing role in enhancing efficiency, error reduction, and cost savings was discussed, although quantifying ROI was noted as being difficult for such ventures. In a related matter, social and labour issues were viewed as demanding transparency, whistleblowing channels, and board training to address and prevent cases of sudden value erosion from scandals.

Effective governance was regarded as requiring board-level oversight via integrated dashboards, scenario testing, and a "whole systems" approach that treats supply chains as seamless units. Customer demands for ESG transparency and talent retention were seen as drivers of resilience, fostering collaboration among boards, management, investors, customers, and suppliers.

The panellists predicted that in three years, success will hinge on AI integration, geopolitical foresight, data-driven adaptability, predictive analytics, genuine supplier partnerships, and holistic governance practices. Some of the key takeaways from the workshop emphasized the need to assess vulnerabilities and mitigate risks via mirroring production, distributing logistics, stockpiling, and diversifying suppliers. Embedding physical climate risk evaluations in pre-investment due diligence for high-exposure assets was also seen as key.

Workshop 3: Inclusive Growth: Harnessing Diversity and Human Capital

The “Inclusive Growth” workshop provided an update on human capital practices amid evolving global conditions. Moderated by **Pru Bennett**, ACGA Council Member and Partner at Brunswick Group, the panel examined the need for performance-driven human capital strategies that remain resilient through cultural and political changes and underscored that effective management of diversity and human capital remains critical to long-term business performance.

Panelists **William Ng**, Stewardship Director, HSBC Asset Management, **Nana Li**, Head of Sustainability and Stewardship, Asia Pacific, Impax Asset Management, and **Bess Joffe**, Managing Director and Global Head of Client Sustainability Strategy, MFS Investment Management, underscored the importance of human capital, inclusion and diversity strategies as core drivers of innovation and risk mitigation. Bess highlighted that despite global efforts to rebrand diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)

programmes, including reframing them as “culture and inclusion”, the core focus on diversity of thought, experience and background remains integral to investors’ fulfilment of their fiduciary responsibilities. Human capital was described as the largest asset absent from corporate balance sheets and critical to value creation and destruction. The discussion stressed the importance of moving beyond token representation, using the example of Japan where regulatory quotas for female directors were viewed as having limited impact unless the representation of diverse candidates scales further. Having board nomination committees with a female chair was suggested as a potential accelerant for progress.

A central theme was the value of direct access to relevant executives to gain a better understanding of corporate practices during stewardship discussions. Meetings with human resources (HR) or functional leaders were regarded as providing deeper insight into culture, employee turnover drivers, effectiveness of reskilling programmes, and controversy handling than reported metrics alone. Panelists noted that some issues, such as resolution of sexual harassment cases or actual working and living conditions can be better understood through discussions with HR or operational managers and site visits. While site visits were deemed useful, they were seen as being curated and that a deeper level of dialogue together with more thoughtful reporting metrics is necessary to separate substance from presentation.

Speakers critiqued the quality of current disclosures, noting that most reports still emphasize input metrics such as training hours over outcomes such as injury reduction, productivity gains and promotion velocity for different employee demographics. It was noted that company-disclosed information is increasingly being supplemented with third party information such as Glassdoor reviews and relevant controversy data.

The panel addressed the growing influence of AI and automation with generative AI tools already redesigning roles and human capital requirements. Participants recommended companies treat reskilling as a strategic capital investment, using AI to augment human capabilities rather than replace workers, whilst applying diversity-of-thought principles to reduce algorithmic biases.

The core recommendations were for companies to communicate clear alignment between people’s strategies and growth, board-level accountability, outcome-based KPIs in remuneration and to provide access for investors to relevant executives. Evidence-based, performance aligned human capital strategies were considered critical in embedding durable practices able to withstand shifting political and regulatory environments.

Plenary 3: Family-controlled Companies and Chaebols – Succession Planning and Creating Effective Boards

The panel considered effective boards in markets dominated by family-controlled companies and offered an in-depth exploration of governance dynamics in Korea's chaebol system, shedding light on the structural and cultural challenges that shape board behaviour. Moderated by **Yonghwan Choi**, Head of ESG Research Team at NH-Amundi Asset Management, the session featured insights from a diverse range of perspectives: **Jong-Ha James Yoon**, Founding Partner and Head of Korea Buyout at MBK Partners; **Jongmin Shim**, Deputy Head of Korea Research at CLSA Securities Korea; **Michael Ling**, Company Secretary at CLP Holdings, Hong Kong; and **Yoo-Kyung Park**, ACGA Korea Working Group Co-Chair and Managing Director, Head of Global Emerging Markets Equities, Fundamental Strategies, APG Asset Management Asia. The discussion combined private equity, investor, and market strategist perspectives and highlighted CLP Holdings' successful transition from a family-controlled firm to a governance model rooted in institutional practices.

James Yoon opened the discussion with a data-driven assessment of why Korean boards struggle to deliver oversight geared towards value-creation for companies and shareholders. He highlighted that Korea has the lowest proportion of directors with corporate experience among OECD countries, while maintaining unusually high representation of former government officials from prosecutors' offices, tax authorities and key regulators. Yoon argued that family-controlled public companies populate boards designed primarily for crisis or defensive risk management rather than proactive value creation. His analysis of 8,000 agenda items revealed that independent directors in family-controlled firms voted with management over 99% of the time—a reflection of agendas tightly controlled by founding families. He also noted that diversity gaps persist: professors make up 38% of conglomerate boards, and gender representation remains very limited due to strong opposition large business groups despite legislative efforts to broaden inclusion.

Building on this, Yoo-Kyung Park reframed the issue as not merely one of corporate governance, but of group governance. She emphasized that ultimate decision-making power resides with controlling families and their elite secretariat teams, whose KPIs prioritize preserving family control over creating shareholder value. CEOs of listed companies often function as chief operating officers with limited autonomy, making it difficult for boards to influence strategy, succession planning or major investments. Park stressed that when scandals occur, investors must question who truly made the decision – usually the family group rather than the listed entity. She also highlighted how corporate culture is heavily shaped by founder-family signals, including instructions to "stay within the law," which indirectly governs behaviour across the group.

Adding a macro perspective, Jongmin Shim noted that Korea's rapid governance reform momentum has been fuelled by the surge in retail investor participation, from 9% of the voting population pre-

COVID to 32% by 2021. This shift has created political incentives to accelerate programs like the Value Up initiative and implement Commercial Code amendments strengthening directors' fiduciary duties. Despite optimism, Shim cautioned that much of Korea's stock market gains are concentrated in semiconductor earnings, leaving governance reforms as an underappreciated catalyst for long-term value creation.

Offering a contrasting perspective and example, Michael Ling highlighted how a family-controlled company can successfully institutionalise strong governance. CLP Holdings demonstrates that clean ownership structures, a clear separation between ownership and management, and a board culture focused on long-term stewardship can coexist with family control. Practices such as using independent search firms, conducting externally facilitated board reviews, and granting independent directors leadership roles on key committees illustrate how family ownership need not come at the expense of governance quality.

A standout moment came when Park was asked what she would do if elected President of Korea. She stated her first priority would be to "revive the Corporate Governance Code and Stewardship Code," empowering both domestic and foreign institutional investors to hold boards accountable. Criticising domestic investors' reluctance to engage during recent Commercial Code reforms, she argued that real progress requires shared responsibility. Park offered two immediate recommendations for boards: ensure that CEOs are truly qualified and avoid parachuting in nominees from the tax office or prosecutor's office, whose presence signals defensive, rather than strategic, intent.

ACGA 24th Annual Conference Sponsors

Supporting Sponsor

Samil PwC

Congratulations to ACGA for once again hosting a highly successful conference in Korea. The continued success of its annual conferences reflects ACGA's unwavering commitment to advancing corporate governance practices across Asia. These conferences have become an important platform for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among investors, companies, and regulators, reinforcing the belief that strong governance is essential for sustainable growth.

Samil PwC is proud to support this mission as Korea's leading professional services firm. With more than 4,300 people including 400 partners, we are dedicated to helping clients build trust and reinvent so they can turn complexity into competitive advantage. Across audit and assurance, tax, deals and consulting, Samil PwC brings together the teams, resources and alliances our clients need to act boldly and achieve real results in an increasingly dynamic business environment.

As a member firm of PwC—a global network built on 175 years of trusted relationships—Samil PwC combines deep local insight with global capabilities to deliver lasting value. For over five decades, we have been working with companies across industries in Korea, helping them harness technology, make smart investments, and prepare for the future.

As an ACGA member aligned with its belief that corporate governance is fundamental to the long-term development of Asian economies and capital markets, Samil PwC established a Governance Center dedicated to governance-related services and thought leadership activities. This pioneering initiative aims to equip board members and stakeholders with the knowledge and tools needed to implement and operate effective corporate governance practices. From new director onboarding and board assessments to tailored advisory services, we provide holistic solutions that strengthen boards' oversight and accountability.

Our Governance Center works closely with boards, investors, and management teams to deliver global perspectives and practical insights. As independent and trusted advisors, we help companies build governance frameworks that are resilient, effective, and future-ready. By providing tailored training and hosting conferences for board members, we keep them ahead of emerging issues and offer guidance for informed decision-making in their oversight role.

At Samil PwC, we believe that good governance is not just about compliance with laws and regulations—it is a strategic priority. By fostering transparency, integrity, and long-term thinking, we help companies create sustainable value for all stakeholders. As partners in this shared vision, together with ACGA and our global PwC network, we remain committed to shaping a future where strong governance drives trust, growth, and resilience across Asia.

Marketing Sponsor

Align Partners Capital Management Inc.

Align Partners is honored to support the 24th ACGA Annual Conference in Seoul. As an ACGA member since 2024, we contribute to the Association's mission of strengthening corporate governance across Asia. This year's conference comes at a pivotal moment for Korea's capital markets, and we are pleased to bring together global investors, regulators, academics, and corporate leaders for constructive dialogue.

Founded in 2021, Align Partners manages approximately US$800 million (as of October 2025) and is led by a team with experience in private equity, investment banking, and value investing. Dedicated exclusively to the Korean market, our mission is to close the "Korea Discount" by promoting stronger governance, accountable boards, and fair treatment of all shareholders.

Since becoming an ACGA member, we have refined our engagement framework, combining global best practices with a tailored approach to Korea's ownership structures and lessons from our earlier campaigns. We begin with private dialogue grounded in bottom-up analysis and seek to resolve issues collaboratively with management. When those efforts are insufficient, we escalate to public campaigns anchored in facts, long-term value creation, and the interests of all shareholders. Campaigns during 2021–2024, including the election of independent directors at SM Entertainment and JB Financial, as well as meaningful improvements in shareholder return policies at seven Korean banks demonstrated that strategic activism can deliver governance outcomes. Building on this track record, we continue to engage with portfolio companies and are preparing new campaigns ahead of the 2026 AGM season.

We also welcome the positive developments taking place across the Korean capital markets. In 2025, the first and second amendments to the Commercial Act were passed, which codified directors' fiduciary duty to shareholders, strengthened the "3% rule" for audit committee elections, and mandated cumulative voting for large-listed companies. Looking ahead, a third phase of Commercial Act amendments and further dividend income tax reform remain on the agenda and will be important for the improvement of Korean corporate governance and capital markets.

As Korea stands at an inflection point, Align Partners is committed to advancing governance reform and market development in collaboration with policymakers, institutions, and fellow ACGA members. We thank ACGA's leadership and are proud to support this year's conference and the development of a more resilient, trusted, and competitive market environment for all stakeholders.

Luncheon Sponsors

Capital Group

Capital Group has been a member of the Asian Corporate Governance Association (ACGA) since 2003, joining as one of its earliest members and maintaining a position on its board. Through our membership, we have collaborated on numerous initiatives aimed at strengthening corporate governance practices across the region. Our involvement is exemplified by our ongoing participation in AGCA working groups and numerous open letters released by the ACGA or sub-groups of ACGA investor members that Capital Group has co-signed, where aligned with our key priorities in engagement and proxy voting within this market. Our involvement has spanned a range of topics, including:

- Advocating for the prioritization of Annual Reports before annual general meetings (AGMs) and aligning of record dates closer to AGMs in Japan
- Sharing our perspectives on independent non-executive director tenure as a part of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) code consultation
- Advancing best practices for several governance-related regulations, such as executive remuneration, board-stakeholder engagement, board leadership, and shareholder rights and escalation mechanisms, in communications to the Securities and Exchange Board of India.
- Encouraging enhancements to The Draft Disclosure Framework on Climate-related Financial Risk, specifically related to concerns around timelines and the lack of alignment with ISSB standards, in communications to the Reserve Bank of India.
- Underscoring the need to accelerate the reduction of 'strategic shareholdings' in Japan to advance governance practices and help companies achieve sustainable long-term growth, in communications to Japanese companies.

In addition to our work with the ACGA, the importance of the Asia-Pacific region for Capital Group is demonstrated through our client base and engagement across the region. For instance, Capital Group conducted over 550 ESG engagements with issuers in Asia-Pacific in 2024. Additionally, our annual global ESG survey—covering more than 1,110 investors worldwide—captures valuable insights from the region, with nearly one-third of responses originating from Asia-Pacific. These perspectives help shape our understanding of ESG attitudes and adoption trends across the region.

Shinhan Financial Group

Shinhan Financial Group (055550.KS) is one of Korea's leading diversified financial institutions and a long-standing advocate of strong corporate governance, sustainable growth, and responsible finance. Founded on a heritage that traces back to Korea's first modern bank in 1897, Shinhan has evolved into a group that serves more than 20 million active customers across banking, credit cards, securities, asset management, insurance, and digital platforms.

Shinhan as a Forerunner in Korea's Value-Up Initiative
Shinhan is at the forefront of Korea's Value-Up movement, which aims to close the long-standing "Korea Discount" by strengthening governance, capital efficiency, and shareholder alignment. The Group was the first among its peers to launch and publicly disclose a comprehensive Value-Up Plan

that targets structurally higher profitability, enhanced capital discipline, increased shareholder returns, and a continued reduction in share count through buybacks and cancellations.

Our roadmap includes maintaining a CET-1 ratio firmly above regulatory expectations, implementing a disciplined RWA allocation process based on Return on Capital (ROC), and committing to delivering higher and more sustainable shareholder returns. By linking executive KPIs to ROE, Total Shareholder Return (TSR), and ROC, Shinhan is positioning itself as a benchmark for value-driven management in Korea.

A Board and Management Team Strengthened Through Experience

Shinhan's governance framework has been strengthened by lessons from past challenges, resulting in a Board and management team that is more robust, independent, and resilient. Founded by 341 individual shareholders, Shinhan has always valued strong governance, and in recent years has further institutionalized best practices in oversight, accountability, and leadership succession, under the leadership of the Board and management.

Today, the Board comprises diverse and highly independent directors with deep expertise in finance, technology, sustainability, accounting, law, and global business management. Both the Board and senior executives actively engage with investors through direct dialogues—such as roadshows and roundtables—and indirectly through structured post-meeting feedback processes to ensure that shareholder perspectives are fully reflected in strategic and capital-allocation decisions. This commitment to active listening underscores Shinhan's belief that transparent communication and constructive engagement are central to long-term value creation.

A Continued Commitment to Enhancing Governance Standards in Korea

Looking ahead, Shinhan will continue to advance initiatives that improve profitability, strengthen capital efficiency, and build a more resilient portfolio. At the same time, the Group, with its asset management arm and other investment functions within its subsidiaries, recognizes the importance of strong corporate governance in determining sustainable value for investors. Shinhan Asset Management recently joined ACGA based on the belief that improving governance standards will help enhance the long-term value of the Korean capital market.

Shinhan Financial Group, not only as a major financial company but also as an institutional investor, is committed to setting a new standard for corporate value creation in Korea—one grounded in disciplined execution, strong governance, and continuous dialogue with our shareholders and other stakeholders.

Workshop Sponsors

CLP Holdings

CLP Holdings Limited (CLP) is one of the largest investor-owned power companies in the Asia-Pacific region, with a diverse portfolio that spans power generation, transmission and distribution, and retail across Hong Kong, the Chinese Mainland, Australia, India, Taiwan Region, and Thailand.

CLP is committed to good governance as we believe good corporate governance is ultimately a value enabler for our organisation and our shareholders.

CLP is pleased and proud to be associated with the ACGA as a corporate member and as one of the sponsors for the ACGA's 2025 conference. We, as a corporate, value the opportunity of engagement with investors and we have always appreciated the perspectives of the investors as providers of financial capital.

We are grateful for the opportunity to participate in one of the sessions at the 2025 conference. We see this as a unique occasion to exchange ideas and learnings from own corporate governance practices and at the same time, to educate ourselves of the investment communities' expectations of "what good looks like" on corporate governance matters.

We also found that the corporate roundtable session provided unrivalled insights into how Korean corporates navigate through investors' expectations. Korean corporates have enjoyed immense commercial success domestically and internationally and in more recent years, the calls for better corporate governance have provided a fascinating backdrop on how the Korean corporates would position in light of this.

CITIC CLSA

CITIC CLSA, a leading Asian capital markets and investment group, has been at the forefront of regional corporate governance research and advocacy. As the proud founding sponsor of the Asia Corporate Governance Association, CITIC CLSA recognizes the significance of strong corporate governance practices in driving sustainable business growth. For over two decades, we have collaborated with ACGA to publish numerous studies including the flagship CG Watch report to promote and advance corporate governance standards in Asia. These reports delve into governance frameworks, regulatory practices, and disclosure standards, enabling investors to make more informed investment decisions.

Meanwhile our award-winning research brand, Sustain Asia distinguishes itself through a unique blend of top-down thematic studies on industry trends and bottom-up company-specific analysis from all individual equity analysts. This dual approach provides unparalleled insights into both macro and micro sustainability issues, and empowers investors to factor in the most financially material issues when making investment decisions. And by enabling clients to align their strategies with sustainability goals, we are well-positioned to drive the advancement of responsible investment practices across the region.

In the recent years, CITIC CLSA analysts have delivered more than 1,000 sustainability-related research reports and expert access. Sustain Asia team have also provided institutional clients with on the ground insights via thematic-styled investor tours, encompassing discussion topics on Sustainable AI transition, CG reforms and Energy transition etc.

Get in touch by emailing SustainAsia@clsa.com to receive these insights.

Supporting Organizations

The Korean Corporate Governance Forum (KCGF)

The Korean Corporate Governance Forum (KCGF) proudly co-sponsored and provided local support for the Asian Corporate Governance Association (ACGA) Conference held in Seoul on 12–13 November 2025. Under the theme "From Compliance to Value Creation: A new era in Asia", the two-day event brought together over 250 asset owners, asset managers, regulators, policymakers, corporate executives, academics, and governance professionals from all around the world.

KCGF assisted the ACGA in inviting local speakers for the main session and two-day investor delegate meetings prior to the formal event. The delegate meetings generated lively debate and practical recommendations that resonated strongly with participants. KCGF's active involvement underscored its position as Korea's leading voice on corporate governance reform. By bringing global best practices to Seoul and showcasing Korea's own progress, KCGF helped foster greater alignment between international expectations and domestic implementation.

The success of the 2025 ACGA Seoul Conference reinforces KCGF's commitment to raising governance standards, enhancing investor stewardship, and promoting sustainable value creation in the Korean capital market. KCGF looks forward to building on this momentum and continuing its close partnership with ACGA and the broader regional governance community in the years ahead.

Namuh Rhee
Chairman, KCGF

CFA Institute

Congratulations to ACGA on the successful conclusion of its Annual Summit in Seoul.

CFA Institute is a global, not-for-profit, mission-driven professional association of more than 190,000 members, as well as 160 member societies around the world. Our members include investment analysts, advisers, portfolio managers, and other investment professionals.

Guided by our mission to lead the investment management profession globally for the ultimate benefit of society, CFA Institute views stronger corporate governance standards as essential to healthy capital markets. This is particularly relevant in Asia Pacific, where diverse economic development, market maturity, and regulatory frameworks create unique challenges. Yet, as capital flows become increasingly global, one theme stands out: corporate governance is a critical differentiator and driver of performance.

Adopting global best practices in governance not only protects investors and builds trust, but also powers long-term shareholder value, market growth, and investor protection. At CFA Institute, our work in this area spans advocacy research, consultation responses, comment letters, stakeholder engagement, and thought leadership through events and media. These initiatives reflect our commitment to driving meaningful behavioral change.

Looking ahead, CFA Institute remains committed to working alongside ACGA and other stakeholders to champion governance reforms that enhance transparency, accountability, and trust across Asia Pacific markets. By joining forces, we can foster resilient capital markets that serve investors and society.