



THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

335 East 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017
Tel (212) 439-4000, Fax (212) 986-1083

Check against Delivery

Address

by

H.E. Kim Sung-Hwan

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade

of the Republic of Korea

at

the 67th Session of the General Assembly

of the United Nations

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Mr. President,

Allow me at the outset to express my sincere congratulations to you on your assumption of the Presidency of the 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I have every confidence that under your able leadership this session will be crowned with a great success.

Mr. President,

Humanity continues to advance, drawing on our collective wisdom to address challenges throughout human history. Even though new global challenges to mankind such as climate change, poverty and disease, underdevelopment, terrorism and WMD proliferation are now testing the international community, I have no doubt that we will overcome these challenges in our future path.

The United Nations, the symbol of our collective wisdom, should take a greater responsibility in coping with these challenges. I note with great satisfaction that the United Nations is becoming a more accountable and trusted international organization under the prominent leadership of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. In this regard, I recognize and support the Secretary-General's "Five-Year Action Agenda", which I believe will guide us in addressing current challenges of the world and towards the future we are aiming for.

Mr. President,

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in June in Rio represented a critical step forward to usher in the world we hope for. The outcome document, 'The Future We Want,' marks a substantial advancement for sustainable development.

The task before us now is to capitalize on our achievements thus far and exert even greater efforts on follow-up actions such as developing sustainable development goals, strengthening the institutional framework and mobilizing finance.

As part of such endeavors, the Republic of Korea established the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI). Sixteen countries signed the Agreement on the Establishment of the GGGI on the margins of the Rio+20 meeting, and the Institute will be launched as an international organization starting October this year. The GGGI will engage in a range of activities for disseminating the green growth paradigm, in which economy and environment form a virtuous cycle.

Moreover, the Korean Government is prepared to step up our contribution to the international efforts to achieve a sustainable future by hosting the Secretariat of the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The Republic of Korea stands ready to render wholehearted support for the successful launch and stable operation of the fund.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea is keen on contributing to the balanced and harmonious development of the international community, and is fully cooperating in such efforts in the context of the UN framework.

The Korean Government continues to increase its official development assistance to help achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The Republic of Korea underscored the importance of inclusive growth and development partnership at the 2010 G20 Seoul Summit and the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Busan in 2011. In June of this year, the 'Global Partnership' was launched for the implementation of the Busan commitments. The Busan Forum and the launch of the Global Partnership will mark a turning point for international development cooperation by broadening our perspective from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness.

Our own experience has taught us that investment in education is at the heart of effective development. In this vein, we are confident that the Education First Initiative of the Secretary-General will indeed pave a solid foundation for achieving the international development goals. The Korean Government extends its strong support for the initiative.

The Republic of Korea is also taking an active part in relevant discussions in shaping the post-2015 development framework. We fully recognize the importance of a comprehensive approach which takes into account the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Mr. President,

The aspiration for human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as democratic values is the primary driving force for the advancement of humanity. Today, many countries have been striving to advocate human rights in tandem with democracy. The United Nations, as the epicenter of the international community's efforts to promote and protect human rights, has provided timely assistance to such countries.

Recently, we witnessed the strong desire of people in the Middle East and North Africa to materialize their pursuit of democracy and respect for human rights. The recent positive developments in Myanmar are also well worth noting in this regard.

However, while these changes are still unfolding, enormous challenges and difficulties still lie ahead. In Syria, a great number of civilians have been killed and gross violations of human rights have been witnessed. With high hopes on the efforts of Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, the Joint Special Representative for Syria, the Korean Government will stand by the Syrian people through this time of suffering together with the international community.

The Korean Government expresses deep concern on the recent attacks against diplomats and diplomatic missions in several places. Such violence cannot be justified regardless of the motivations.

Mr. President,

Putting an end to sexual violence against women in armed conflicts is another issue that warrants serious attention. War time sexual violence is a fundamental infringement of human rights, and is in fact an affront to human dignity and integrity. History has left us important lessons that warn us against such egregious acts.

The Republic of Korea would like to urge the UN system and all Member States to make utmost efforts to put an end to such atrocities, not only taking all measures to protect women and girls in armed conflicts, but also providing effective remedies and reparations for victims and ending impunity by bringing the offenders to justice in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the UN.

Mr. President,

It requires a sound historical consciousness and heartfelt soul-searching on any past wrongdoings in order for solid peace and stability to be established between nations. A country's true valor is proven when it confronts the dark side of its history and endeavors to rectify past wrongdoings.

It is the firm conviction of the Korean Government that the respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty as enshrined in the United Nations Charter should be the guiding principle for stable international relations. No country should abuse international legal procedures and the notion of the rule of law in order to infringe upon the territorial integrity and sovereignty of other countries, or to distort the historical justice.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea is actively contributing to the global efforts in pursuit of “a world without nuclear weapons”. The Seoul Nuclear Security Summit held last March brought together leaders across the world to galvanize the vision and the determination of the international community for a peaceful world without nuclear terrorism. Throughout the Summit, the Korean Government played a leading role in forging a consensus to take important practical steps, such as substantial reduction of nuclear materials, the promotion of the universality of international conventions, and cooperation to combat illicit trafficking of nuclear materials.

I am delighted that the High-Level Meeting on Countering Nuclear Terrorism, which was convened this morning, has provided new momentum to push forward the efforts at the Seoul Summit for the prevention of nuclear and radiological terrorism.

Furthermore, existing and emerging threats in cyberspace such as rampant transnational cybercrime and potential cyber conflicts present a serious challenge. It is, therefore, imperative that the international community address these threats.

By hosting the 2013 Conference on Cyberspace, the Republic of Korea hopes to contribute in multiple ways to the ongoing global efforts to maximize the benefits of digital networks. We further believe that the event will provide an unparalleled opportunity to pool our efforts to cope with threats stemming from the misuse of information and communication technologies.

Mr. President,

The North Korean nuclear program continues to pose a threat not only to the security of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia, but indeed to the very basis of the international non-proliferation regime. As long as the DPRK continues to pursue its nuclear and missile programs, achieving the goal of sustainable peace on the Korean Peninsula and in the region will remain far off.

Unfortunately, the international community's aspirations were shattered once again when the DPRK launched a long-range missile this April. In response to this provocative action, the UN Security Council reaffirmed that the international community will not tolerate the continued pursuit by the DPRK of its nuclear and missile programs by issuing a firm and resolute Presidential Statement in an unprecedentedly swift manner.

We urge with concern that the DPRK should take concrete measures aimed at denuclearization which will also open an avenue to improving the livelihood of its people. At the same time, we sincerely hope that the DPRK should listen to the international community's call for the improvement of its human rights situation, as repeatedly affirmed in the relevant UN resolutions.

Mr. President,

As a country that has risen from the ashes of war, we have learned the values of peace and security. It is in this context that we earnestly hope to have the opportunity to promote such values by serving as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the 2013-14 term. The Republic of Korea is determined to fulfill this role with the greatest enthusiasm and devotion. We hope the Member States of the UN understand and support our bid for the membership.

Mr. President,

We are united by the ideals set out in the UN Charter. In pursuit of international peace and security, further promotion of social and economic development, and promotion of human rights, we should embrace a spirit of cooperation and tolerance, with the United Nations at the center of international efforts to this end.

The Republic of Korea will continue to fully assume its part in the invaluable work of the United Nations, taking on the various challenges that humanity should continue to tackle. Thank you for your attention.