

**Address by President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea
at the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

September 26, 2018

Madam President, Mr. Secretary-General and distinguished delegates,

I would like to express my deepest condolences on the passing of Kofi Annan, the 7th Secretary-General of the United Nations. The world will forever remember his name that has been etched in the road to peace.

I would like to congratulate Ms. Maria Espinosa, on assuming the Presidency of the General Assembly. I hope the United Nations will be able to reach out to every corner of the globe through the 73rd Session of the General Assembly.

I also hope that the United Nations will make further progress in contributing to the international community under Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's excellent leadership.

As I had done last year, I stand here once again with a sense of urgency and excitement.

Over the past year, something miraculous has taken place on the Korean Peninsula. For the first time in history, the leader of North Korea crossed the Military Demarcation Line to visit Panmunjeom. A historic summit between the United States and North Korea was also held on the Sentosa Island in Singapore.

Chairman Kim Jong Un and I removed the shadow of war and resolved to usher in an era of peace and prosperity. At the U.S-North Korea summit, the two sides agreed to work towards achieving complete denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula, ending hostile relations and establishing a permanent peace regime. President Trump and Chairman Kim moved and gave hope to those who desire peace all around the world.

North Korea dismantled its nuclear test site in Punggye-ri under the observation of the international community. The United States and the Republic of Korea suspended large-scale joint military exercises and built trust.

I would like to thank and salute President Trump and Chairman Kim's courage and resolve as they usher in a new era on the Korean Peninsula as well as in U.S.-North Korea relations.

Last week in Pyongyang, I met Chairman Kim for the third time and reached an agreement once again to turn the Korean Peninsula into a land of peace free from nuclear weapons and threats. Chairman Kim expressed his hope of completing denuclearization as soon as possible to focus on economic development.

Moreover, Chairman Kim expressed his commitment to permanently dismantle the missile engine test site and launch platform in Dongchang-ri under observation of the international community as a first step, in order to expedite progress in denuclearization.

Furthermore, he expressed his firm willingness to continue to take additional denuclearization measures including the permanent dismantlement of nuclear facilities in Yongbyon as the United States takes corresponding measures in the spirit of the Sentosa Agreement.

The Korean Peninsula has remained under the armistice over the past 65 years. Ending the Korean War is an urgent task. It is a process that we must go through in order to move towards a peace regime. I look forward to seeing bold measures for denuclearization implemented among the related countries, leading to the declaration to end the War.

Regardless of the challenges that lie ahead, the leaders of the South, the North and the United States will move step by step towards peace based on mutual trust.

Such a dramatic change has been possible thanks to the support and encouragement of the people around the world who desire peace. In particular, the United Nations gave North Korea the courage to embark on the road to peace. I would like to express my gratitude to the United Nations for its role.

This is, however, just the beginning. I would like to ask for continued support and cooperation from the member states on our journey towards complete denuclearization and permanent peace. The Republic of Korea will spare no effort to encourage North Korea's participation in the international community while adhering to the resolutions adopted by the United Nations.

Madam President,

Last winter, a prelude to peace on the Korean Peninsula unfolded in PyeongChang in Gangwon Province. It was the moment when the Olympic Truce resolution adopted at the UN General Assembly in November 2017 came to precious fruition.

Secretary-General Guterres and many heads of state extended their congratulations on the participation of North Korean athletes and officials in the PyeongChang Olympic Winter Games. They expressed their wishes for unity and peace on the Korean Peninsula. The world was awakened to the sense of new history of peace being written. I would like to thank Thomas Bach, President of the International Olympic Committee, for paving the way for North Korea's participation in the Winter Olympics.

Just over a month after the close of the PyeongChang Paralympic Winter Games, Chairman Kim and I met for the first time in Panmunjeom. The United Nations welcomed and actively supported the adoption of the Panmunjeom Declaration. By doing so, it provided tremendous strength to the meetings that have followed, including the second inter-Korean summit, the U.S.-North Korea Summit and the recent inter-Korean summit in Pyongyang.

At the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly, I expressed the hope that North Korea will choose peace on its own accord in order to establish sound and sustainable peace. This hope was shared by the United Nations and all of the international community.

North Korea responded positively to our hopes and calls. Chairman Kim changed the direction of the political situation on the Korean Peninsula through his New Year's address on the first day of this year. The participation of North Korea's athletes and delegation in the PyeongChang Winter Olympics provided a decisive momentum to break the impasse in building peace.

On April 20, North Korea officially ended its policy of nuclear development and has since devoted all of its efforts towards economic development. On September 9, in the ceremony marking the 70th anniversary of its foundation, North Korea expressed its commitment to peace and prosperity instead of boasting its nuclear capabilities. North Korea moved out of longstanding isolation on its own initiative and stands before the international community once again.

Now, it is the international community's turn to respond positively to North Korea's new choice and efforts. We must assure Chairman Kim that he has made the right decision in committing to denuclearization. We must encourage North Korea to stay on the path that leads to permanent and solid peace.

The role of the United Nations is crucial. The UN Secretariat has continued its efforts for dialogue and engagement, including the invitation of North Korean officials to international conferences.

The United Nations has stated its commitment to "leave no one behind." My sincere hope is that the UN's vision of sustainable development will be realized on the Korean Peninsula.

I have no doubt that if the international community paves the way, North Korea will not stall on making strides towards peace and prosperity. The Republic of Korea will spare no effort to guide North Korea towards that path.

I would like to call on the United Nations to share its experience and wisdom.

Madam President,

The process of working towards denuclearization and establishing peace on the Korean Peninsula is a process that also leads to building peace and cooperation in Northeast Asia.

Northeast Asia is home to one-fifth of the world's population, and it accounts for a quarter of the global economy. However, regional conflicts stand in the way of pursuing broader cooperation. We will begin the work of resolving conflicts in Northeast Asia starting from the Korean Peninsula.

On August 15, I proposed the creation of an East Asian Railroad Community, which would involve six Northeast Asian countries and the United States. The European Coal and Steel Community, which gave birth to the creation of the European Union, is a living example of what this kind of initiative could achieve.

I believe that the East Asian Railroad Community will be able to serve as a starting point for the creation of an energy and economic community in East Asia, and going a step further, lead to a multilateral peace and security architecture in Northeast Asia.

The two Koreas are working to reconnect railroads and roads that had been disconnected. Going forward, the Republic of Korea will be engaging in close consultations with countries in the region on concrete steps towards the East Asian Railroad Community.

As we work to realize the UN spirit of multilateralism and pave the way for a future of shared prosperity, I would like to ask for the support and cooperation of the international community.

Madam President,

The Republic of Korea, together with the United Nations, has weathered the storms of modern history. The United Nations and the Republic of Korea share common values and philosophies.

This month, the Government of the Republic of Korea announced its vision of an “inclusive nation” based on a people-centered governing philosophy.

We are moving towards a fair and just nation as well as a society in which no one is discriminated against and everyone lives in harmony.

“Inclusiveness” is also a philosophy embedded in international development cooperation. The Government of the Republic of Korea will steadily expand its contribution to development cooperation to create a global community that leaves no one behind.

The Republic of Korea is also increasing its assistance to people who are suffering from human rights violations and discrimination, particularly the most vulnerable groups, including children, youths, women and those with disabilities.

We increased our financial aid for refugees five times in the past five years. Starting from this year, Korea is providing 50,000 tons of rice every year to developing countries that are suffering from severe food crises.

I believe that there needs to be a holistic approach encompassing peace, development and human rights to fundamentally resolve humanitarian crises. The Government of the Republic of Korea will engage in discussions and provide support to “make the United Nations relevant to all people.”

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Anyone who has confronted the abuse of power to advance human rights carries in his or her heart the first clause of the Declaration, “All human beings are born free and equal.”

In particular, I am working to realize gender equality in a tangible way as an important part of our administrative agendas. All forms of discrimination and violence against women are being dealt with even more sternly.

Korea has a firsthand experience of “comfort women”, who were victims of suffering inflicted by the Japanese military. We will actively participate in discussions among the international community over women, peace and security. We will also work together with the international community on the efforts to eradicate sexual violence in conflict.

Responding to climate change and transitioning to a low-carbon economy are challenges and tasks facing our generation.

The Government of the Republic of Korea will raise its share of renewable energy in the nation’s total power generation to 20 percent by 2030.

We will faithfully implement the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 in compliance with the Paris Agreement and assist developing countries’ pursuit of sustainable development by supporting them with climate change responses.

Madam President, Mr. Secretary-General and distinguished delegates,

For the two Koreas, the significance of the United Nations goes beyond any international organization. At the 46th UN General Assembly on September 17, 1991, all of its 159 member states unanimously adopted the resolution for joint accession by South and North Korea to the United Nations. That date was coincidentally World Peace Day.

The representatives of South and North Korea pledged in their respective speeches that although South and North Korea started as separate members, they would eventually become one someday through reconciliation, cooperation and peace.

Now, after 27 years have passed, South and North Korea are realizing the pledge made on that day. We have crossed the barriers of division and are tearing down the walls in our heart. We are proving to the international community that when we come together, we have sufficient means to establish peace.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We all desire peace. Peace represents the relatives and neighbors we love, and the hometowns we long for. Peace means sharing what we have together. A peace we have all achieved together is a peace for all.

I'm confident that all of you will always be with us on the path to permanent peace and denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula as well as on the journey to a peaceful world.

Thank you.