

President Abdulla Shahid,
Secretary General António Guterres,
Distinguished delegates,

Standing before you again in two years at the United Nations General Assembly, I am keenly reminded of the precious normal daily lives that had been lost.

Guided by the leadership of President Shahid who assumed presidency of the 76th session of the UNGA, I hope the international community will gather its wisdom and work in collaboration to tackle global crises.

For the past 5 years, Secretary General Guterres has worked tirelessly to revitalize and reform the UN, and I offer my sincere congratulations and respect to you, Mr. Secretary-General, for your re-election victory.

I am most certain that you will make greater strides in the key agenda dearest to your heart such as peacekeeping operations, climate response and SDGs.

I hope that the UNGA session this year will impart to the people of the world a message of hope that we will emerge victorious from the pandemic and climate crisis and attain sustainable development.

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General and Distinguished Delegates,

Humans, by nature, build and live together in communities.

Resorting to collective intellect and mutual aid available in those communities, humanity has prevailed over a myriad of infectious diseases and lived in co-existence.

The Covid-19 pandemic will also be surmounted by the love of humanity and solidarity, and at its heart, the UN shall stand.

In our fight against coronavirus, borders were crossed to share genomic information; vaccines were successfully launched through close collaboration; and therapeutics are also being developed at a rapid pace.

A triumph over coronavirus demands us to break down barriers.

The horizons of our lives and thoughts have extended from villages to countries, and from countries to the entire planet.

This, I reckon, is the coming of an era of global community.

In this era of global community, we employ one another and work with one another. We gather our wisdom together and we act together.

To date, countries with advanced economy and more power have taken the lead in the world. Yet, from now, all nations are called upon to move in tandem with their best possible goals and best possible approaches in pursuing sustainable development.

As the pivot of such cooperation and action, the UN will be asked to take on a larger role than now.

Founders of the UN, having gone through the scourge of two world wars, aspired to establish an order for international peace.

Now, the UN is requested to recommend a new set of rules and goals as it ushers in this era of global community.

To facilitate mutually beneficial cooperation within the framework of multilateral order, the UN must become an institution that builds trust among nations.

An institution that brings together the commitment and capabilities of the community of nations to galvanize action.

The Republic of Korea will take an active part in the international order of solidarity and cooperation to be led by the UN.

Korea, a newly independent state after World War II, was able to build a democracy and a strong economy with the support of the UN and the international community.

Now a responsible member of the international community, Korea is determined to step up its efforts to help countries prosper together and embrace one another.

Korea will take the lead in putting forward a vision for partnership and co-existence that can be shared by both developed and developing countries.

A task most urgent for the global community is delivering an inclusive recovery from the coronavirus crisis.

Low-income families, the elderly and other vulnerable groups were left most widely exposed to the threat of coronavirus.

Socioeconomic problems built up over the years were brought to the fore by the pandemic.

Poverty and hunger have deepened.

From income, jobs to education, gaps widened across gender, class, and countries.

The UN has been calling for reducing such inequalities already for years by putting forth the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.

Now, it is incumbent upon all members of the UN to work with greater vigor to realize the SDGs.

Korea will stand together to help all people in every country live without the fear of coronavirus.

We will deliver on our 200-million-dollar pledge to COVAX AMC. As one of the global vaccine production hubs, we will strive for an equitable and expeditious supply of Covid-19 vaccines.

Korea will also stand at the vanguard of the endeavors to achieve the SDGs.

In a bid to defeat the pandemic and make a new leap forward, we are pushing forward the Korean New Deal policy.

Notably, we are reinforcing employment and social safety nets and expanding investment in people under the Human New Deal to realize an inclusive recovery that puts people first.

Our policy experience from the Korean New Deal will be shared with the rest of the world.

To help developing countries advance closer towards SDGs together, Korea plans to scale up its ODA, particularly in green, digital, and healthcare - the areas that have seen a surge in demand during the pandemic.

Another pressing task for the global community to undertake is responding to the climate crisis.

Even as we speak, our planet is getting hotter faster than anticipated.

The community of nations must join forces in closer concert with one another to push forward carbon neutrality.

Last year, Korea committed itself to carbon neutrality by 2050 and legislated its vision and implementation framework by enacting the Framework Act on Carbon Neutrality.

By next month, we will finalize our 2050 carbon neutrality scenario and unveil our enhanced 2030 NDC at COP 26 in November.

We have shut down coal-fired power plants earlier than scheduled and ended public

financing for new overseas coal-fired power generation, with efforts underway to ramp up the generation of new and renewable energy.

Carbon neutrality can be achieved only when each and every country is engaged in continued cooperation.

Action plans must be also sustainable.

Through Green New Deal, Korea is turning its carbon neutrality commitment into opportunities to cultivate new industries and create jobs.

Many Korean businesses are voluntarily joining the RE100 Campaign and expanding their investment in hydrogen and other new and renewable energy, while pushing forward ESG management and carbon neutrality with greater force.

The government, for its part, will firmly back up the private sector in technology development and investment.

Korea will scale up its climate ODA and set up a Green New Deal Trust Fund with a view to supporting the work of Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) and share its technologies and capacity for carbon neutrality.

We will stand ready to help developing countries build their capacity to tackle the climate crisis.

Moreover, building on our experience as the host of the P4G Seoul Summit in galvanizing the global commitment into climate action, Korea seeks to host COP28 in 2023.

We aspire to take on a more vigorous role for the faithful implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General and Distinguished Delegates,

The most ardent dream of the global community is creating a life that is peaceful and secure.

The birth of the UN has transformed the paradigm of international relations based on competition and conflict into the one of coexistence and shared prosperity.

The UN has endeavored to replace the incomplete peace maintained by the balance of power with sustainable peace grounded in cooperation, thereby promoting freedom for entire humanity.

To ensure a complete, lasting peace will begin taking firm root on the Korean Peninsula,

Korea remains fully committed to doing its part.

Envisioning a de-nuclearized, co-prosperous Korean Peninsula, the government of the Republic of Korea has steadily carried forward the Korean Peninsula peace process, and amid the support of the international community, achieved historic milestones – the Panmunjeom Declaration, Pyongyang Joint Declaration of September 2018 and military agreement resulting from the inter-Korean Summit, as well as the Singapore Declaration from the US-North Korea Summit.

Peace on the Korean Peninsula begins always with dialogue and cooperation.

I call for speedy resumption of dialogue between the two Koreas and between the United States and North Korea.

I hope to see that the Korean Peninsula will prove the power of dialogue and cooperation in fostering peace.

Two years ago in this very place, I declared zero tolerance for war, mutual security guarantee and co-prosperity as the three principles in resolving issues related to the Korean Peninsula.

Last year, I proposed a declaration to ending the War on the Korean Peninsula.

More than anything, an end-of-war declaration will mark a pivotal point of departure in creating a new order of ‘reconciliation and cooperation’ on the Korean Peninsula.

Today, I once again urge the community of nations to mobilize its strengths for the end-of-war declaration on the Korean Peninsula and propose that three parties of the two Koreas and the US, or four parties of the two Koreas, the US and China come together and declare that the War on the Korean Peninsula is over.

When the parties involved in the Korean War stand together and proclaim an end to the War, I believe we can make irreversible progress in denuclearization and usher in an era of complete peace.

In fact, this year marks a meaningful 30th anniversary of the simultaneous admission of South and North Korea into the United Nations.

With the joint accession to the UN, the two Koreas both recognized that they were two separate nations different in systems and ideologies.

However, such was never meant to perpetuate the division.

For when we acknowledged and respected each other, only then could we set out on a

path to exchange, reconciliation, and unification.

When the two Koreas and the surrounding nations work together, peace will be firmly established on the Korean Peninsula and prosperity fostered across entire Northeast Asia.

That will go down as a Korean Peninsula Model in which peace is attained through cooperation.

North Korea, for its part, must brace for changes that befit the era of global community.

I expect that the international community, together with Korea, remain always ready and willing to reach out to North Korea in a cooperative spirit.

Heeding the yearnings of the separated families, already advanced in age, we must lose no time in pressing ahead with their reunions.

When South and North Korea are engaged together in regional platforms such as the Northeast Asia Cooperation for Health Security, a more effective response to infectious diseases and natural disasters will become feasible.

As a community bound by common destiny on the Korean Peninsula, and as the members of the global community, the South and North, I hope, will come together to join forces.

Towards building a Korean Peninsula that promotes shared prosperity and cooperation, I will make ceaseless efforts until my very last day in office.

The recent situation in Afghanistan serves as a stark reminder of the crucial role that the UN plays in advancing peace and human rights.

Coming December, the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial will be hosted in Korea.

To ensure safer and more effective operation of UN peacekeeping missions, Korea will make use of this opportunity to encourage closer cooperation in the international community.

For the UN's initiatives in conflict prevention and peacebuilding, Korea too will increase its fair share of contribution.

Korea will make a bid for a seat as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the coming 2024-2025 term, and to build sustainable peace and thriving future generations, it stands ready to play an active part.

I look forward to your cooperation and support in this regard.

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General and Distinguished Delegates,

Humanity, even in the darkest hours of adversity, has never lost hope for the future.
Trusting one another, working side by side, we have changed that very hope into reality.
Even in the face of the COVID-19 crisis, we are yet again sowing the seeds of hope.
To build back better, we are gathering our greatest strengths.

If humanity is united as one and never loses sight of today, we will surely be able to build a better tomorrow.

As humanity embarks on a new journey for ushering in the era of global community, I count on the United Nations to lead the way with a spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

Thank you.