

Check against Delivery

Address

by

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Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade

of the Republic of Korea

at

the 65th Session of the General Assembly

of the United Nations

25 September 2010

New York

Mr. President,

I would like to begin by extending my warmest congratulations to you on your assumption of the Presidency of the 65th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. I have every confidence that under your distinguished leadership this session shall indeed yield fruitful results.

May I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. We deeply appreciate his wholehearted commitment and selfless dedication to the noble and lofty goals of this august organization.

(MDGs)

Mr. President,

Since its launch in 2000, we have made headway towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). And yet the progress made varies greatly across regions and countries, and is uneven across targets. Among other things, maternal and child health warrants our special attention as the most off-track goal in most regions. Indeed, improving maternal and child health is the best investment we can make to carry momentum over to all other closely related goals. Having attached importance to this goal, the Republic of Korea has joined the G-8 Muskoka Initiative for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health. Furthermore, Korea fully supports the Secretary-General's pursuit of the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, and welcomes the enthusiasm of all stakeholders for this important initiative as well demonstrated at this week's meeting.

With only five years remaining until 2015, the prospects for meeting the MDGs are not entirely encouraging. It is high time for the international community to renew its resolve and galvanize global efforts to achieve these vast and meaningful goals. I earnestly hope that when we gather again to review the progress in 2013 we will find that the implementation of the commitments at the High-Level Meeting which was held earlier this week, exceed our most optimistic expectations.

(Development Cooperation)

Mr. President,

We must bear in mind that the success of the MDGs hinges on honoring development commitments and redoubling efforts to strengthen global partnership. Fully recognizing this, the Republic of Korea has embarked on a mid-term plan to triple its ODA budget over the next five years to 0.25 percent of GNI, despite tight financial constraint.

As a new member of the OECD Development Assistance Committee, Korea is seeking to improve the quality of its development assistance by undertaking far-reaching reforms in its ODA system. Basic law on ODA has been enacted as the first step forward last year. Korea will also align its development policy to reflect the actual needs of the recipient countries and encourage their ownership. With its unique experience of fast economic and social development, Korea will do its utmost to play a bridging role between the donor and recipient countries.

Next year, Korea will host the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF-4) in Busan. The Korean government will exert every possible effort to ensure that this forum serves to map out new direction for international development cooperation that can address evolving global needs.

(G20 Seoul Summit)

Mr. President,

It is indeed our common belief that development cooperation is an investment for all. A sustainable and balanced world economy requires us to narrow down the persistent development gap. This is the shared goal the Group of Twenty (G20) and the United Nations aspire to attain.

The Leaders of the G20 countries agreed to table development as a crucial new item on the agenda for the upcoming G20 Summit in Seoul this

November. The development agenda of the G20 will concentrate on building capacity to promote economic growth in the developing world. In this way, the G20 is expected to complement the ongoing development agenda such as the UN MDGs.

The global financial safety nets will be another new agenda item at the Seoul Summit. Robust and reliable global financial safety nets are vital, especially for developing countries which are most vulnerable to volatile global capital flows.

The Seoul Summit will focus on faithful implementation of the previous agreements, which will help to bring back the stability of the global market at an early date. The Leaders will continue to coordinate their policies for strong, sustainable and balanced growth of the world economy. Reforms of international financial institutions (IFIs) and financial regulations will also be central to the discussion at the Summit.

As the G20 presidency this year, Korea is committed to ensuring a successful outcome from the Seoul Summit to contribute to overcoming the current crisis and to working out the post-crisis management of the world economy.

(Green Growth)

Mr. President,

In discussing economic growth, particular emphasis must be placed on green growth. Indeed, this lies at the heart of sustainable development. In an effort to curb greenhouse gas emissions, Korea has set a voluntary reduction target of 30% against business-as-usual level (BAU) by 2020. Together we will gradually shift the growth paradigm from an energy-intensive to green growth economy. As part of the efforts to spread the green growth strategy in the international community, we launched the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) last June. We hope that this institute shall become an integral part of the global endeavor to gear toward sustainable development as Korea strives to share green growth vision and assistance with developing countries.

(Peacekeeping operations)

Mr. President,

On the peace and security front, peacekeeping operations have become the most visible and defining feature of the United Nations. The increasing demand and growing complexity of peacekeeping operations call for continuous improvement in the operation of the missions. Strategic goals should be set more clearly. The troops should be deployed more swiftly. Operations should be conducted in a more professional and disciplined way. To this end, all stakeholders, including troop-contributing countries and financial contributors should focus on close coordination and cooperation.

The Republic of Korea has been a committed contributor to the United Nations peacekeeping efforts. Korea dispatched 240 contingent troops this year alone to MINUSTAH in Haiti to help rebuild the country shaken by a tragic earthquake. Currently, some 650 Korean soldiers are serving in 11 peacekeeping missions, including UNIFIL in Lebanon. We believe that the newly enacted ‘Law on Participation in UN Peace-Keeping Operations’ will further enhance our response capacity in UN peacekeeping operations.

(Non-proliferation)

Mr. President,

One of the most urgent security challenges of today is the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery. It is imperative to further strengthen international disarmament and non-proliferation regimes built around the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). In this regard, Korea welcomes the adoption of the final document at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We trust that this hard-won achievement will lay the groundwork for future progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The nexus of WMD and terrorism also poses a grave risk to global security. Based on this shared understanding, the Leaders at the Washington Nuclear Security Summit last April recognized the potentially catastrophic consequences of nuclear terrorism and committed to strengthen nuclear security. It was agreed that concrete steps for securing nuclear materials should be taken to prevent them from falling into the hands of terrorists. We look forward to follow-up discussions on nuclear security at the second Nuclear Security Summit which is to be held in Korea in 2012.

(Situation on the Korean Peninsula)

Mr. President,

In August, President Lee Myung-bak of the Republic of Korea proposed a new vision of peaceful reunification of Korea, which will serve to stabilize inter-Korean relations and ultimately bring about a reunified Korea. Along this vision, we will work earnestly to build three communities in the process; comprising, a ‘peace community’ to ensure security and peace on the Korean Peninsula; an ‘economic community’ to develop North Korea’s economy and eventually achieve inter-Korean economic integration; and lastly a ‘community of the Korean Nation’ which will ensure dignity, freedom and human rights of all individuals.

However, this vision for peaceful reunification is not without obstacles. 60 years after the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950, there still remain threats to peace on the Korean peninsula. A case in point is the sinking of a Republic of Korea’s naval vessel, the *Cheonan*, by a North Korean torpedo attack on March 26th this year. The international community sent a firm and unified message to North Korea by adopting the UN Security Council Presidential Statement of July 9th. North Korea must take responsibility for its unprovoked attack and refrain from any further provocations.

And yet, the most looming task in our step towards a ‘peace community’ is the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue. Without North Korea’s forgoing its nuclear weapons program, no sustainable peace could be achieved on the Korean peninsula and beyond.

Through the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874, the international community urged North Korea to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. To depart from sanctions and isolation, North Korea should make the strategic decision to live up to its commitments to denuclearization. A nuclear-free North Korea would also open an avenue to saving its people from the current miserable human rights and humanitarian situation.

Last year, on this very occasion, President Lee proposed the “Grand Bargain” initiative: a single comprehensive agreement that encompasses all steps for North Korea’s denuclearization and the Five Parties’ corresponding measures. Together with the international community, we will work tirelessly to have North Korea make the right choice that would ensure a better future for both its country and people.

Once North Korea demonstrates genuine change in its behavior and attitude, my government is prepared to engage in meaningful dialogue and cooperation with North Korea.

(Global governance and UN reform)

Mr. President,

We are witnessing that many global challenges are testing the international community. These challenges cannot be addressed by one country alone or even by a group of countries. They summon us as global citizens to a common purpose. They call on the United Nations to assume the mantle of global leadership.

To effectively address the increasingly diverse and interconnected challenges, the United Nations should heighten its reform efforts aimed at broadening its operational response capacity.

The launch of UN Women is a clear testimony to the world community’s efforts toward this end. Korea commends this historic move to step up progress in meeting the needs of women and girls worldwide. The UN

Women will greatly contribute to enhancing system-wide coherence, bringing together resources and mandates for greater impact. We also welcome the recent appointment of Mme. Michelle Bachelet at its helm.

Furthermore, the upcoming review of the Human Rights Council represents an excellent opportunity to garner our collective efforts to make the Council more effective and efficient in fulfilling the promises we made at its establishment. The Republic of Korea looks forward to working closely with the international community in this joint effort.

No reform of the United Nations can be complete without Security Council reform. It is crucial that the Council be more representative, effective and accountable. To this end, the Republic of Korea will continue to play a constructive role in finding a widest possible agreement on the major issues relating to the Council reform.

Mr. President,

The challenges facing the United Nations are formidable. We may succeed in some endeavors, and may not in others. But we should not forget that the United Nations is the best source of hope for many of those who are suffering from armed conflicts, extreme poverty, and human rights abuses across the globe.

The Republic of Korea remains fully committed to playing a due part in the efforts of the United Nations to translate those hopes into a reality.

Thank you.