

Keynote Address
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Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Fellow Delegates,

Last year, at this august chamber, the international community shared our concerns on the state of the world: conflicts and civil war, terrorism and violent extremism, climate change, epidemics and grinding poverty. Unfortunately, this oversupply of problems and deficit of

solutions remains unchanged.

This sense of crisis paradoxically drew us together to achieve historic milestones, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

For the UN, 2016 marks the first year for the next seven decades. It is also the first year for implementing those landmark achievements. In an increasingly interconnected world that faces a daunting array of complex challenges, the UN's central role is crucial more than ever.

In order to address this multi-layered equation in a sustainable way, the UN should heed calls for inclusive multilateralism:

Multilateral efforts to include the vulnerable, the isolated and the unempowered.

The World Humanitarian Summit last May and the high-level meetings on refugees this week represent part of our joint efforts in this regard.

And most of all, we have the flagship blueprint for inclusive multilateralism, the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” This is our promise for a world ‘leaving no one behind.’

The Republic of Korea is often referred to as a success story for development. As such, we are ready to share our experiences for implementing the SDGs.

Over the past year, we launched major initiatives in the areas of education, women empowerment, science and technology and rural development. We have introduced Korea Aid, a new development cooperation initiative, a mobile, customized service delivered to those in need. Vulnerable groups are already experiencing better health and medical services, as well as enjoying food and culture.

The SDGs and the Paris Agreement are inextricably linked for future of our planet and people. They should be mutually-reinforcing and lead to a virtuous cycle.

In this respect, as the host of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Korean Government is taking domestic steps to complete the ratification of the Paris Agreement within this year.

The successful implementation of the SDGs relies on the strong anchor of peace and security as well as respect for human rights.

Peace in the fullest sense can be achieved only when peace and security, development and human rights are advanced together – this is the essence of the new concept of “sustaining peace.” This broadens peacebuilding from post-conflict contexts to the whole spectrum of conflict. We share the renewed awareness that conflict prevention

should be mainstreamed in all UN activities.

As was pointed out by many speakers this week, a frequent signal of looming conflicts is the violation of human rights. Reading the writing on the wall before it is too late is imperative in conflict prevention. We know this from experience, for instance in Syria, Libya and Afghanistan.

Another symptom is the spread of violent extremism and terrorism. These are multi-faceted challenges, and there is no one-size-fits-all solution. We need a holistic, inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach.

Mr. President,

This year, the UN embarks on its next 70 years. For us, 2016 is also an important symbolic year.

Twenty-five years ago, the Republic of Korea, together with the DPRK, became a UN member state. Two Koreas were admitted simultaneously, but we had a dream that in the future, there would be one Korea, just like one reunified Germany in 1991.

Looking back on the track record of these two members, there could be no starker contrast. Korea has successfully achieved the three goals of the UN – peace and security, development and human rights. On the contrary, North Korea is oppressive, impoverished and increasingly

trigger-happy.

Like President Obama remarked, one has come to the path of success, while the other has become a wasteland.

The reason why North Korea has failed is because of its fanatical and reckless pursuit of nuclear and missile programs.

- North Korea is the first and only country which has conducted nuclear tests in this century; it has conducted five nuclear tests so far in violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions. Just yesterday, at the CTBT Friends Ministerial Meeting, 43 countries issued a joint statement condemning in the strongest**

terms Pyongyang's nuclear tests.

- North Korea is the first and only country which has developed nuclear weapons programs within the NPT regime and announced its withdrawal from both the IAEA and the NPT.**
- North Korea is also the first and only country which has officially declared itself as a "nuclear-weapon state" in its constitution.**

North Korea's recent nuclear tests show that its nuclear programs have neared the tipping point. The latest nuclear test was the strongest ever. The test interval was also significantly reduced from 3 years to 8 months. Given North Korea's unpredictability and its penchant for provocations, its next

nuclear test may come even sooner than we expect.

Moreover, North Korea has also fired 22 ballistic missiles of all types this year alone. This means one ballistic missile almost every ten days. These nuclear and ballistic missile tests show that North Korea is now at the final stage of nuclear weaponization.

Even more worryingly, North Korea has not only advanced its nuclear and missile capacity but publicly threatened the actual use of those weapons. It has blackmailed to use nuclear weapons preemptively, which can strike us in four to five minutes. With such a direct existential threat to our survival, my Government has no choice but to take

necessary defensive measures to protect the nation and the citizens.

In the wake of the fifth nuclear test, the Security Council agreed to work immediately on appropriate measures under Article 41. It is currently discussing a new resolution on North Korea. The Council should adopt stronger, comprehensive sanction measures that go beyond resolution 2270. It should close the loopholes in that resolution, and further expand and reinforce existing sanction measures.

In this context, we need to answer a more fundamental question. North Korea's repeated violations and non-compliance of Security Council resolutions and

international norms is unprecedented and has no parallel in the history of the UN. It shows that North Korea is totally ridiculing the authority of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

It is crystal clear that North Korea, as a serial offender, has manifestly failed to uphold its pledge to abide by the obligations in the UN Charter, particularly to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council. Therefore, I believe it is high time to seriously reconsider whether North Korea is qualified as a peace-loving UN member, as many countries are already questioning.

My President warned that unless we put a brake on Pyongyang's nuclear ambition

**today, we will come to regret it tomorrow.
This is our last chance.**

Mr. President,

North Korea's fifth nuclear test not only revealed its unambiguous nuclear ambition, but it also exposed its utter disregard for its own people. At a time of the worst flood in decades, North Korea went ahead with the nuclear test in the hardest hit region.

It is estimated that North Korea has spent at least 200 million dollars for this year's nuclear tests and missile firing – a sufficient sum that could have been used for the flood relief.

Two years ago, the report of the Commission of Inquiry (COI) was an eye-opener for the entire world on North Korea's systematic, widespread and gross human rights violations. We saw its ripples spread to the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly, the Security Council and even beyond.

We live in an age of greater accountability. North Korea's human rights abuses should no longer be allowed any impunity. It is our common responsibility to protect the people of North Korea when its regime is defiantly refusing to do so.

Now is the time for action.

First, the international community's human

rights mechanisms must take more robust measures. The Group of Independent Experts on Accountability is to recommend practical mechanisms of accountability for human rights violations in the DPRK, in particular violations amounting to crimes against humanity.

Second, we need to sharpen our focus on North Korea's so-called state-sponsored forced labor abroad. There should be greater scrutiny on human rights of North Korean workers abroad and the possible diversion of their wages into North Korea's WMD programs.

Third, the international community should pay greater attention to the yearnings of

North Koreans for freedom and human dignity. They deserve greater access to the realities of the outside world.

On our part, we recently enacted the North Korea Human Rights Act. This is a reflection of the nationwide consensus that we should no longer ignore the human rights situation in North Korea.

Mr. President,

This year marks Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's tenth year in office. This is the last UN General Assembly during his term. Let me commend his commitment and leadership, as well as his remarkable achievements in a range of areas, most

notably on climate change, sustainable development, gender equality, humanitarian assistance and UN management reform. I believe that Secretary-General Ban has greatly strengthened the role and status of the UN by overcoming the unprecedented challenges during this age of great transformation.

The UN is currently on its way to choose his successor. I am confident that the next Secretary-General will strive to make the Organization more efficient and stronger by building on his legacy.

The founding principle of the Republic of Korea is at one with the spirit of the UN Charter's "We the Peoples." I hope that this

General Assembly will increase the confidence on the UN as the beacon of hope in this turbulent world.

Let me assure you that my country will remain a staunch supporter of the UN in its important and vital mission. Thank you.

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