

## A NEW START FOR AN ERA OF A GLOBAL COMMUNITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY: CHANGE AND REFORM IN THE UNITED NATIONS

*The following is an abridged version of an address given by President Kim Young Sam on October 22, 1995, at a special commemorative meeting of the UN General Meeting to celebrate the 50th anniversary of its founding.*

### *Looking Back on the Past*

At this moment, this noble hall brims with the hopes and expectations of the people of the world—their dreams for the future of humanity.

First of all, I would like to pay tribute to the leaders who founded this world body half a century ago and to their courage and hope for the future after overcoming the despair and frustration born of two world wars. Their dreams of a better world have already changed our planet tremendously and have affected each one of us.

Despite the Cold-War confrontation and other conflicts, humankind has been able to enjoy peace, largely due to the contributions of the United Nations. It has supported economic and social development in many newly emerging nations and worked for their growth and prosperity.

At this very moment, the United Nations flag is fluttering on all continents, symbolizing its spirit of dedication to peacekeeping, improvement in human rights, the eradication of disease and the protection of children. The United Nations has made a sparkling contribution to the advancement of human civilization over the past 50 years.

### *The Future Agenda*

All our expectations have yet to be realized, however, and the collective security system envisaged by the founders of the United Nations remains a goal to be sought after.

There are many other issues also facing us today, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, environmental pollution, absolute poverty and international terrorism and crime. We cannot solve these difficult problems unless we tackle them together.

The world is undergoing drastic change.

Riding the crests of the information age and globalization, the international order is not only undergoing an epochal change, but human civilization itself is being radically transformed.

In this time of great change, we cannot but agonize over what direction the United Nations should take in the future.

Should every nation close its doors and pursue its own national supremacy and self-interest, the future of the world would be bleak indeed. It is my conviction that only the United Nations can fulfill the pivotal role in creating a global community for the 21st century.

### *Change and Reform of the UN are Needed*

Change and reform are the guiding principles of historical development. Change is a means of growth, and reform is the engine of development. Change and reform in the United Nations are necessary if it is to maintain the new world order while creatively adapting to the revolutionary changes in human civilization.

While welcoming a series of discussions which has been held for the reform of the United

Nations, I would like to express my views on the issue.

First, the United Nations has to be democratized and made more efficient, and all regions of the world must be more equitably represented on the Security Council. In particular, I agree with many other member nations that the number of council members with veto power – a power that has crippled the United Nations for a long time – should not be raised.

Second, the U.N.'s function of preventing conflict should be strengthened. Many of the proposals in the Secretary-General's Agenda for Peace should be adopted.

Third, the United Nations must respond more actively to the demands for economic, social and environmental development. In order to attain true world peace and security, economic and social conflicts in the international community have to be resolved at all costs.

Fourth, the United Nations has to actively undertake activities that give priority to human beings and families. The ideas of "human security" and "family values" presented at the United Nations World Summit for Development last March will be the most important goals for people around the world in the 21st century.

Fifth, new plans must be established for the burden-sharing and administration of the additional budget arising from the strengthening of U.N. functions. The sooner the U.N. undergoes change and reform, the better it will be for our world. To that end, I hereby propose that a special general assembly for U.N. reform be held.

### *Korea is Ready to Help*

For the Republic of Korea, the past 50 years have been a historic period which have symbolized the ideals of the United Nations. The Republic of Korea was established in accordance with a U.N. resolution in 1948. When the

Communist forces invaded in 1950, the Republic was able to defend its freedom thanks to the U.N. resolution on collective security. Furthermore, the U.N. was a strong and reliable supporter of the Republic during our post-war rehabilitation.

The Republic of Korea, which started as one of the poorest countries in the world, has now become the 11th largest economy in the world and a truly democratic nation. Our success has been a great manifestation of the ideals of the U.N.

Korea will also actively take part in various U.N. development and environmental projects, and increase its monetary contributions. In addition, Korea plans to further increase assistance to developing countries, sharing its experience in industrial development.

In particular, we hope to become a nonpermanent member of the Security Council this year.

The Korean people have always been grateful to the U.N. and will gladly play a leading role in opening the U.N.'s next half-century.

I am convinced that the Korean Peninsula will surely be unified in a democratic way in the not-too-distance future. I humbly and sincerely ask you all to become solid supporters for the peaceful unification of Korea.

We are gathered here in order to provide the world with new hope and courage, just as our predecessors did 50 years ago. We share the cherished desire to turn the 21st century into an age in which we can coexist and prosper together.

Only through our resolution and confidence in the United Nations can we turn our hopes and dreams into reality. In order to achieve that goal, I believe that solidarity among world leaders is the single most important factor.

I hereby respectfully propose that a United Nations summit meeting be held every five years.

This great organization has taken its first step into a new half-century. I am firmly convinced that this step will be the first in a glorious march towards the creation of a real global community led by a revitalized United Nations. **VIP**